

THE
ASCENTS
OF THE
SOUL:
OR,
DAVID's Mount
TOWARDS
GOD's House.
BEING
PARAPHRASES
ON THE FIFTEEN
PSALMS of DEGREES.

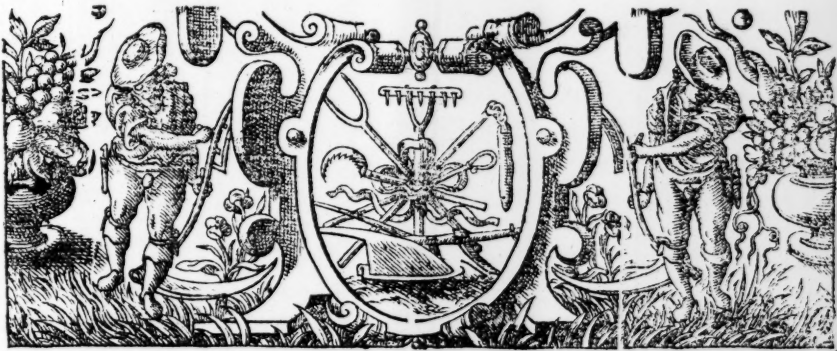
Written in Italian,
By the Illustrious GIO. FRANCESCO LOREDANO,
a Noble Venetian, 1656.

Render'd into English, Anno Dom. 1665. by J^{no} Knight
Hon. Geo. Henry Lord Colezane.

Né si comincia ben, se non dal Cielo.

LONDON,
Printed by A. G. and J. P. for Robert Harford, at the Angel in Cornhill, 1681.

1801



To the most Honour'd
LUCINDA.



AS the kind Sun (which cheers our dying Muse)
From the bright East, brings day, and with it, views
The World's fair Parts; but finding none so sweet
As th' Orient Beauties, whom he first did greet;
Back to his Morning Mistress he doth run;
Ending his round Heat there, where he begun.
So, though my Rhimes, like stragling Waters, fled
From Wit's clear Spring; from You, the Fountain's
Yet now my Fancy pays its final Stream (Head;
To its first *Helicon*, and fairest Theam.

For sure, 'tis Heav'n's, with your blest Influence,
('Tis not th' Extream's usual Coincidence)
Which as it did at first our Verse Baptize;
So now redeems These from Idolatries.
That their late wand'ring Feet no more may roam;
But (like the elder Brothers) keep at home.
While You restore our Music, and renew
Our Mind, to sing again to God, and You.
See here our Muse washes her Feet, and all;
Turns Penitent, that had been Prodigal:
And as a *Magdalen*, with all her Store,
She worships Goodness; but doth waft no more.
She sends her Honey back, to that dear Hive,
Where she'll be bury'd, (if not kept alive.)

Then with her Notes, (Swan-like) she'll end her Days,
Singing Your Worth, her *Requiem*, and God's Praise.

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To the most Honour'd
LUCINDA.

M A D A M,

YOu may smile, while I blush, that You find me speak in Print, when You know I love no such phrase or thing; because it argues an affectation, which I have not 'till now, been guilty of. But since it is too general a Disease, that Poverty and Laziness bring upon Linguists; no wonder if my Converse with some such, hath infected me at this time, when remembering how I used from beyond Seas to Congratulate Your New-year with some Foreign Present: And finding none of that Store left by me, (which was dearly bought, and far fetch'd) I turn'd from my Cabinet, to my Closet, and there found this Venetian Chrystal, so finely wrought and polished by the Author, and not ill set (perhaps by my putting a File unto it) as I was resolv'd to make an Offering of it to that Shrine Your Oratory, wherein are many things worth the admiring; but none more than the pious behaviour of Your self.

This is so excellently useful, as that we may be pardoned for desiring a Reflection of it. And therefore, Madam, I send this Mirrour of Devotions, not to direct or dress Yours; but to display them unto others, and to do my Duty so far to all the Good; as to do You Right in the discovery of so rare a Goodness as Yours is; which hath not only embolden'd me to venture up the Stairs to Your Praying-place, and to revisit these Degrees, (whereon I went above ten Years ago) but likewise to shew the World how Your Piety is exemplary like David's; it hath led and instructed a numerous Train to follow You (though very hard'y) up a great way towards the Mountain of Holiness.

And, Madam, since this Age doth want such Presidents in Worth, in Goodness, and in Place, as Your late noble Lord, and
a Father,

The Epistle Dedicatory.

Father, have been; we may earnestly beg of God to add to Your Honour and Prosperity Fifteen Degrees, and prolong Your wonderful Life marvelously farther than Hezekiah's. If then You might see Your Sons not go backward in the World, but getting up (like the Children of Israel) out of Egypt, to the best and most difficult Advancements; I mean, up the many Steps to the House of God, (there to praise his Blessings, and to pray for Yours.) I doubt not but it would be a Token of much Comfort and Honour to Your self, and of as much Happiness and Benefit to them, as to him, who is ready to say, (with the elder Brother, Gen 27. 31.) Arise, and taste kindly of thy Son's Service, that thy Soul may bless me also.

TO



TO THE READER.



ALTHOUGH the Author's glorious Dedication of this Book (*To the Queen of Heaven,*) together with several other Reasons, would have made me no more in love with this sort of Complements, than the many are who have wrote long Discourses against Prefaces, (and so have sentenced themselves with a Witness, by condemning the very Act in which they were found Guilty :) Yet finding by the sad Example of most the Ingenious, who have failed in their attempts against Epistles prefatory (as he did, who designed a great Building without Inlets or Addresses to it,) that it is a hard matter for People to avoid the Road, and run over Hedge and Ditch, without being judged Men of odd Designs: I therefore take the beaten track to the Town, and am content to keep pace with another's Motion; having took no course to appear before, nor being now spurr'd on to this Publication by any Sentiments, but those of Gratitude before-mentioned. Were I stung by such a Gad-fly as Vain-glory, I would not Print a Translation now, (which was made above ten years ago) to dub me a Writer; when the Form of it, as much as the Matter, will be so dull and insipid to the Wits of this time. (These are for no Book-learning, no writing by Gentlemen, unless it be (at the Modish Rate) strangely extravagant, profane, or foul.)

Therefore as I leave these Gallants to the Tyranny of that *Genius* by which they both act and suffer; so purposely have I dismounted their expectation of any pass-time from me; for I have slept the Spring, I have lost the Season for youthful Publications; and now I seek to have Audience *incognito* with a grave Senator.

This, methinks, may be sufficient Proof, that I neither ~~court~~ ^{court}, nor expect the stale Title of an Author, for all I am now like one in a Preface. Most Eyes are upon Books, as upon a Horse-Race; on the first Start, or at the ending, more than upon the best part of the Heat.

In short, I tell the Readers what they may find here, though I cannot tell what they may like; for if they look for much *Roman* Ceremony, or *Papal* Devotion, they will go away unsatisfied: For I have

To the READER.

*rede loquinto
Vol. del Sig.
Gio. Fr. Loredano, nel pre-
fatio sua, All
Historia Catal.*

changed the Religion, as much as the Language of my Author; and allowed my self the same Christian liberty in turning or trimming this Piece of his, which he likewise took in some of his Translations: That as the *Signor* dressed it for his Country, I may look after it in mine, and bear the blame, if this Stranger be took for a *Jesuit*. If I conceal some of his Expressions, 'tis not to abuse his intent of appearing to the World a true Catholick; he is now, I trust, Orthodox, and *English* too: Nor would I damp his Spiritual Heats, while I fan Superstition from his great Ingenuity and Zeal.

I know the Silk his words put on is pure *Venetian*, of too curious a Fabrick for me to mend, or indeed to meddle with farther than to add a Lift of courser Materials to the Piece.

Lest it should seem too nice in its Address to the holy Altars, and there be reprov'd (like an *Agag*) for its Delicacy, (falling under the Censures which many such Works have incurr'd, of having more Wit than Zeal in it) and too much *Rhetorick* for much Religion) I have rebated the point of *Loredano's* stile; and where I have cut off some reiterated Elegancies, and Musical words, that (as long Fuges) were but to the same Tune; I took away the Lap of the Senator's Robe, I hope without doing him any injury at all.

*Acts 23. 23. u
πολὺς φασί-
σις.*

'Tis pity a rich Sleeve should be so long, as to hang (like their *Laticlavians*) in the Dirt; or that *Berenice's* appearance should hinder *Agrippa's* Christianity.

I am more apt to exclude *Tertullus*, than *St. Paul*; and therefore, instead of *Oratory*, put in *Scripture* into the Work; that what is lost in Fancy, may be retrieved in Devotion.

And surely no time nor labour would be lost, could I be but as much more useful to the Reader, as I should be just to the Writer, in setting forth his Thoughts with the same pious Impressions and Advantages which they once brought to my Heart. To this they have done good, (as I may publicly own;) and I am not of so strait, so narrow a Spirit, as not to endeavour to communicate a good, according to the Nature, and my Experience of it.

John 1. 46.

Indeed before I travell'd into *Italy*, I heard so much ill said of that Country, (especially of the *Venetians* in it) that I was possess'd with a prejudice like his, who cryed, *Can there any good come out of Galile?* And also prompted by the irreligion of too many Travellers, to think that Contagion the Epidemical Disease of Foreigners, (principally those of higher Rank.)

Therefore when I went abroad, lest I should learn Vices more fast than Language, or live (as formerly) in the proud *Greek* and *Roman* conceit, that every Land was barbarous, but our own; and all the World was naught, but *England*. I was curious to find out what was Spiritual (and rightly so called) beyond Sea, if the lawful Issue of a Noble *Laick*; I look'd upon such a piece of Devotion as more capable of doing good, than the more elaborate Volumes of Churchmen; (who are not thought well enough on, because they make it their business to write well) whereas the slighter Essays of other Gentlemen (which are not of the long Robe) fall more gratefully into the hands of great Persons, and by Emulation of the precedent (if no better motive) work often upon them some Pious effect.

Being

To the READER.

Being acquainted with the Truth before-mentioned, and with the mighty number of *Memoires*, and other Works, lately put forth by the Noblemen of *France*, I ramass'd a good quantity of the most Illustrious modern Writers in *Italy*; and amongst them, the first which I laid hold on, was the Third of the seven Volumes of the Honourable Signor *Gio. Francesco Loredano's* Works; which though set out with all the Garnish that the Poets and Painters could enrich them with, yet discouraged my perusal of them, because I found the beginning of this Volume very Toyish and Romantic.

Stamp. à Venetia, 1654.

'Till I consider'd that Men's Books are oftentimes like their Lives; the first Parts of them slight and youthfull, (and such Leaves as will scarce hide a Nakedness, nay, were better skipt over than perused;) yet their latter Ends may be Grave and Pious, well-order'd and disposed, as the Frize and Cornice of all their Works.

So I search'd on for the Pearl among the Shells; and left not this great and brisk Wit, 'till I found him terminate so well in Meditation, as that I fixed my hand upon his Tablet, thus to Copy out his Piety, if not his Eloquence; and to say (to those who cried, *Come from among them*) *Come and see, is not here a Prophet?* Though he might have been formerly a *Saul*, he is now with the divinest *David*; and this his properest Subject merited Discovery, though it lay hid, like *Saul*, in a heap of Stuff.

Nor was I content only to open the Mine, or fetch out the Oar; but also to fine it from the Dross; that this silken Ladder might be useful, where stronger (like the Bibles) were not so portable, for to raise or keep up some Devotion in me.

And this, I thank God, it did, by my often looking on it; as *La Scala Santa* once had done too, when it happened to me at *Rome*, (as to *St. Paul* at *Athens*) that I had a good opportunity from an Idolatrous place, to pray with much Fervour and Charity for my self, and all Men, that we might not be mistaken, or Hypocritical, in our Worshippings of God, while with Pity I considered the Superstitions of some Christians there, who adored Stocks and Stones more than their Maker; and with shame thought upon the Prophaneness of others among Protestants, that would not allow God a peculiar manner, nor place of Worship.

Thus have you the occasion of the Title I give to this Book, and shall have something concerning the Frontispiece.

Though by the way take notice, that I was never a Promoter of Superstitious Pilgrimages; nor so far reconciled to the Church of *Rome*, as to follow her Steps farther than the Church of *England* approves them: For all I have gone up the Stairs above-mentioned, and the Ascents of *Loredano's* Soul, I hope with some such true Efforts as that Illustrious Senator design'd in his *Preface*, and endeavour'd in his *Paraphrase*; to which good Act, this is but a Scene, or rather as the Curtain which may now be drawn away, lest it hinder the Spectators better Objects.

I have fancied the whole Piece to be a Sketch of *Jacob's* Vision, and *David's* Psalter, like *Israel's* Scale, reaching to the Divine Throne, whereon devout Spirits have scope to run descant up and down, and by the various Motions of their Piety, (as by the several Degrees of their Understandings) they make better Music than the imagin'd

To the READER.

Spheres could ever be supposed to do : For surely, thereupon is grounded the best Harmony of Heaven and Earth ; and thereon we shall meet with a grateful Confort , when we are left never so much alone by the World.

For they who make no use of the Psalms, nor Feast upon them by frequent Meditation, are as obnoxious to Errors , as I can be in any of these Thoughts. Therefore like a Travelling Pilgrim to Mount *Sion*, I pursue my Journey, hoping to reach the end of it , by doing some good to my self, if not to others.

Gen. 35. 1.

And as *Jacob* was required to make an Altar of those Stones on which he rested in his Journey (when he beheld Heaven's Eyes upon him, and Angels moving to and fro for his Succour ;) so I thought my self obliged to make an Offering to God, (as a grateful Monument) of that which had better'd me in my Progress, and help'd me to see who was with me in the way that I went ; so as to bring me again to my Father's House in peace.

May then these Contemplations (and our whole Lives too) be like *Jacob's* Ladder, scaling Heaven it self ; and having their highest ones there, (while some others may be yet upon the low Earth) and while good Thoughts and Actions (like Cœlestial Ministers) ascend to Heaven, and condescend to Earth, let God be set at the end of all we do, that we may receive much Good from such gracious Prospects, and our Pillars (like *Jacob's*) be Anointed to God's Service.

For my part, I desire to build no *Babel*, (of several Languages) but would bring some Materials unto *Bethel* ; though the top of my performance reach no farther than to lay the Foot-pace to God's House.

If *David* (such a Master-builder) thought it Honour enough for him to be but as one of the *Nethinim* in the Temple ; it will be more than Grace enough for me to be there (if but as a *Gibeonite*) in any degree serviceable to the Flames of Piety, or Wells of Salvation ; while I officiate in both those parts of Divine Worship, the two chief Duties of Religion, *Prayer* and *Thanksgiving*.

We see the Soul hath several Steps to take, and many Rounds whereby to be exercised in her Addresses to God ; and they are the Perches whereon she can best recreate or rest her State, while she is in this Cage of the Body. Let us therefore make her as Musical, and as Harmonious, as we may, therein.

Lib. I. Diff. rianum
Arrian. per 101. cap. 17.

The very *Pagan* Worship was Spiritual enough to recommend Hymns and Singing to the Religious, (of what sort soever they be ;) and had I not mentioned far better Motives from Holy Scripture, I should avow my self constrained to this following Psalmody, by the convincing words of several *Heathens*, such as those of *Epictetus*, cited by *Arrian*, and partly quoted in my Title-page.

Rev. 15. 2, 3.
4, 5.

Nor am I discouraged in doing that, which others have done better before me ; since I hear the Vertuous throughout every Age, as well as throughout the Bible, (like those spoken of in the *Revelations*) singing in the words of the Princely Prophets, (*David* and *Isaiah*) *Come let us go up unto the House of the Lord, &c.* I was glad when they said, not *I'll*, but *Eamus*, *Let us go up*.

For though my Head or Hand be not publicly ingaged in the Service of God, or of my King ; yet neither my Retreat nor Sloathfulness shall make me so bad a Servant, or a Subject, as not to employ my Pen and

To the READER.

and Ink, and Blood too, for Religion and Loyalty, as occasion may be offered.

At present, being happy in a long'd-for Recess, I have the grateful Leisure afforded me (which many good Persons want, and might better improve) to thank God, that notwithstanding our desperate Provocations of him (which commensurately heighten our Fears and Dangers) we are not yet sunk down into that utter darkness of the days of *Antichrist*, when the saying, or singing of Psalms, will be rejected with the Church. But we have liberty to go up, with *David*, into *God's House*, and there still beg those surest Mercies which are best for all Men, as well as for me, and so should be desired for us all.

So be it.

THE



T H E
AUTHOR'S EPISTLE
TO THE
READER.



HAT Pen which hath so often play'd the Fool upon the Stage of this vair World (by soothing most of the fantastic Humours, both of our own Genius, and of the Age) would gladly now take up, (like a reduced Prodigal) staying the Torrent of its wilder Courses, that it might a while bemoan its Errors, and beg God's favours, and so raise its Plumes to a braver pitch; taking a glorious flight to the highest place

of Paradise: For,

The Glory of this World is raked up, or rather buried, in the Ashes of our Humane Nature; and he is a mad Lover of Vain Glory, who is a pretender to Immortality, in a Place and Condition, where every thing is Mortal, like himself.

** But how shall we stir up, or awake the Divine Love, that we have either made sad, and heavy, or made to rest, and cease, from doing us good, by a long Series of Offences? Alas! no Tales, or new Romances, dream'd by the finer Wits, to please or propagate the Ages Vanity; nor any serious Histories drawn (like Minerals) out of dark Recesses, by the Curiosity of their Undertakers, to profit and adorn Posterity; no, nor any politic Maxims that dare teach the Art of Government to the Experience of mighty Princes, will now help us to work that Blessed Effect.*

** Here the Author reflects on his former Works, he having writ many Volumes on the several Subjects here quoted, which have been most curiously set forth with ingenious Frisippies and Recommendations.*



It is needful to withdraw from the fruitless Works, from the hurtful Charms of vain Science and Verbosity; to avoid the Point and Praise of Men; to shun the Title and Esteem of a Master in worldly Arts, and to run with devout Requests to intreat the offended Goodness, and loving Kindness of our God.

He continually bows down his Ear to such Cries as (bringing with them the Repentance of the Heart) come in the stead of Holocausts ~~to~~ Heaven. Therefore that I might at last get thither, (though I have been long a Malefactor) I have walked up some Steps, (laid by the Royal Prophet) which may bring us safely to God's House, and from thence to Eternal Felicities. And would to God my Heart could travel more with my Hand, that the Rellishes of my Soul may be as devout, as those of my Pen may seem! And that I had mounted these Degrees with such purity of Affection, as this Jacob's Ladder should be raised, whose top reaches even to Heaven.

So that whosoever desires to rise to the most glorious Palace of the Son of God, if he would reach unto the ineffable Pleasure of a Divine Vision, he must walk up these fifteen Stairs which lead to Holiness and Happiness, and the main Industry labours in vain to get up to these, without Faith and good Works.

Therefore I have here shewn (with David) that there are fifteen Degrees to the holy Mount, and high Place of Heaven; since to advance us thither are so requisite, not only the eight Beatitudes, but the seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit: And he that in this Valley of Vision knows not how to pass on from strength to strength, will surely take the wrong way to Sion.

These are called Steps of Ascent, because who ever intends to make use of them, should do it for his Advancement unto God; for his climbing up by Grace, and not suffer his humblest Thoughts to stoop so low, as to give any great Respect, or Entertainment, unto Earthly Objects.

The five first Degrees are for Christian Noviciats and Pupils, those who begin their Journey towards Heaven in the way of Cæstial Love, and venture to pass through the difficulties of Temptation, the hardship of Affliction, the Swords and Pykes of Censure, and Calumniation. They are such as (with David on his way to Victory) stay themselves on their God, fix their Confidence (with Jacob in his Journey) upon Heavenly Succours, and rejoyce in Spiritual Supports, and press on forward in the hopes of Rewards; and in fine, have so much true Humility, as to attribute the small Progress of their Repentance not at all to their own strength, but wholly unto God.

The five next Degrees assist Proficients in the same Love of God, and of Religion, who are forward in the way of Mastering their Passions, and so are more confident, as better Confirmed, not only to further themselves, but others too, in Divine Contemplations; as well as encourage and invite



to a Plus ultra, to a making on in the Love of God, 'till they have clearly made it out to themselves.

They can meekly beg of God a Confirmation of his Grace, and of their Strength; nor expect any reward, nor conceit any Merit, nor seek any Commendation, either for the exercise of Patience in Adversity, or for doing their Duty in that Condition wherein God hath placed them.

The last five Degrees are for the highest Form of Professors; such as are nearest the top of Perfection above, and the Kingdom of Heaven here below; who can pray for their Persecutors, do good to those that do them hurt, and accompany their own tryed Patience with desires of trying it still more and more: Begging nothing more of God than Lowliness, and Nothingness of Spirit, under all the greatest Demonstrations of his Favour, lest (with St. Paul) they should be exalted above measure, and grow unworthy (by being Proud) of that Love, with which they long to be made one, in an Eternal Charity. Therefore taking their Hearts quite off from the World, and divorcing their Thoughts from Terrene Objects, they imploy their whole Man in beginning their Heaven upon Earth, by the continual blessing and praising of God.

And I pray God these Words may be read with such Thoughts, as may stir up each several sort of Christians to the devoutest Action within their Capacities, kindling in every Breast one Spark or other more bright and fervent, than that can possibly be which is struck out of the black Flint of my Heart, who (like Absalom) have heaped up more Stones of Guilt for the Erection of a Monument in Hell, than I have enjoyed Hours of Life, for the steering my Course to the Glories of Paradise.

Every Book that speaks of God, should be (as a Terminus, or Law-Stone) either to inform, or reform our Footsteps; and those Columns are not (like Enoch's) of Worth, nor of Duration, that build not up the House of Wisdom. Those Figures stand but for Cyphers; those Letters are but Mutes, that do not teach the Ignorant the Right way, or at least, turn the Erronious from the Wrong.

Nevertheless I acknowledge my self not less unapt to Correct the one, than unable to Guide the other, being neither fit for the Office of a Monitor, nor of a Master.

For what I have written, hath been rather to wake my own dying Devotion, than to watch for the Encomiums of others; and for once I can protest the Puff of worldly Applause, (which often Tympanies the soundest Minds with Ambition) did not blow up the Feathers of my Quill to this its present Flight and Undertaking.

He that aspires to Abraham's Honour (to talk with God as a Man speaks with his Friend) doth not give heed to those Whispers of the Serpent, to those

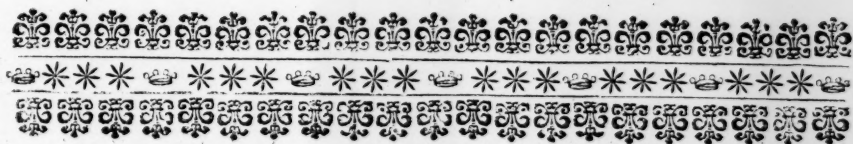


those vain Hopes, (I mean) which Fame and Reputation, those (Terræ Filiæ) Children of the Gyant, bring along with them to deceive us here.

I once thought to be Dictator to my self alone, because Devotion is a Spirit, and like Camphire, if let out too far, or blown about, most commonly 'tis lost, and vanishes away: But when I viewed David, (like Jonathan) climbing up the Rock, and commanding his Armour-bearers to follow him. I had also the courage, both to attend and imitate him; in beckening unto others to creep along with me upon these Stairs which lead unto David's Fortrefs, unto the God of Gods in Mount Sion, and unto his Temple, where every one must speak of his Honour.

And who knows but some others incited (perhaps by my weakest endeavours) may assist hereafter with better address, those who are getting up these Holy Rounds (this Scala Santa) of Meditation? As we see a little Star shines before the Sun, as it were to raise and light up a far greater and more useful Guide than it self.

But (without any more Preamble) not to detain, or deceive the Reader, let me tell him, who is not pleased with this Book, That he may be pleased in regarding the Subject; and if he shall look herein, and find any thing that is good, it is to be returned with due Interest of Praise to God, the true Owner of it, who was the Framers of the World from Nothing, and the Maker of Mankind Upright, though we have sought out many strange Inventions, both to be, and to do Wrong: So that Mistakes, and Men, go hand in hand together; and all the Errors here we must yeild to be our own.



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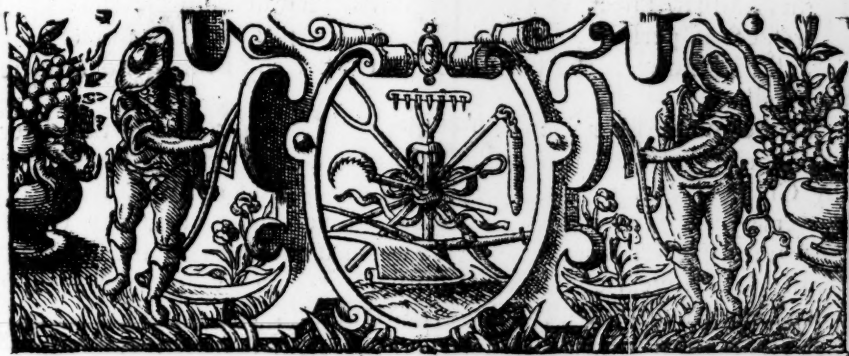
Pfalmorum Laudem.

CHORUS. 1. *Angelorum*, &, 2. *Hominum*.

CHORUS. **T**HE PSALMS are *Paradises Spring*;
Streaming Refreshments every way.

They, 1. Wine, 2. Oyl, 1. Milk, 2. And Honey bring,
1. To Cheer, 2. To Cure, 1. To Feed, 2. T' Allay.
1. When we are merry, Psalms we sing,
2. When we're afflicted, Psalms we say.
1. They Heav'n's, 2. And Earth's Devotions wing,
1. While Angels Praise, 2. Or Men do Pray.

CHORUS. The PSALMS are *Paradises Spring*,
Streaming Refreshments every way, &c.



THE
ASCENTS
OF THE
SOUL.

The first Step upon the First PSALM of
Degrees, being the 120. PSALM.

Ad Dominum cum tribularer, &c.



Most Gracious God, when I have fathomed the
tossing Billows of my troubled Spirit, either by
the depth of humane anxieties, or by some thwar-
ting dispensation of that Providence that moves
upon the great Abyſs: (and was termed Fortune, by
the *Heathens*, rolling the whole Globe upon Waves
of incertain Casualties) Nay, when the Storms of
my violent Passions make my wicked heart like a
raging Sea (foaming out nothing but mire and dirt) in filthy Motions,
and in tyrannical or rebellious Actions. O then, with Humility, Con-
trition, and Sincerity of Intention, I endeavour to strike sayl, for
fear of the Shipwrack of a good Conscience, and make hast to put
into the Harbour of thy Goodness and Compassion. Then,

I intreat that unsealed and unexhausted Spring of Mercy, which
(without upbraiding any for want of worthinels) imparts to all of

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the

the fulness of his Grace. I have access to thy Throne, O Father of Lights, and to Thee, O Glorious Sun of Righteousness, that without respect of persons, hast shined upon the just and the unjust, and lookest so kindly on the Universe, as to offer thy Beams and Beauties unto all.

While on the other side, Thou merciful Lord (crowning thy Eternal Glories with the continued Acts of thy Pity) hast so far lessened thy Greatness, as to receive my Petitions, and not only heard my Prayers by thy Favour, but heap'd up Answers to them by thy Grace. So that my ever-craving needs have never wanted seasonable supplies, nor my desires wearied out thy Bounty: But every wish of mine hath worn some token of thy good will to Mankind, and every Prayer hath been returned (like an acceptable Messenger) with marks of favour.

Seeing then I was made a Creature by thy Love at first, and a new Creation by thy Mercy now; I return again, O Father, with the Prodigal, to beg the excesses of thy Tenderness; the loud soundings of thy Bowels towards me; 'Tis more than ordinary preserving or creating goodness that I want: And Thou, my Everlasting God, hast ever been my Saviour, so that to deny me now the continuance of thy Favour, or the blessing of thy Protection would be to loose the fruit of thy Labour, and the end and Harvest of thy former care.

Therefore let thy Love be still the Banner over me, while the Tongues of those who are eloquent in fraud and falsehood storm my Ears daily with Inveiglements, for the drawing my Heart off from paying its due homage of Thankfulness and Obedience to Thee, the Great and Almighty King.

With the fears of thy Judgments they scare my remembrance of my faults; with the snares of their Allurements, they would draw me aside out of the way that leads to Life; And with false Flatteries, they would indulge my compliance with Sin, and masking Vice under the show of Virtue, seek to betray my soul, (that is too easie and pliable) to the Charms of Sense, and to the Pleasures of the World.

But alas! I perceive (though somewhat too late) how these Mouths of Hell, and Oracles of Satan would christian Cruelty with the name of Justice, and name a cursed Revenge, the Way of Honour. With them, Covetousness is but Frugality; Luxury, the Law of Nature; and Envy, noble Emulation. So that being well nigh lost, and cast away amongst the dark mists or false lights of their vain conceits, I find my self deterr'd from good, and stay'd unhappily in evil.

And truly, O most gracious God, without the assistance of thy Grace, and the protection of thy Love, without the buttress of thy Power, and the foundation of thy Wisdom, What feeble *Jericho's* are all our Breasts? How may the strongest Walls of all our Virtues, and the highest Towers of noble Resolutions be pull'd down (as it were with ridiculous Rams-horns) with the Breath of a naughty Woman, with the blast of an evil Tongue! And who is there (since *Adam*, *Solomon*, *Lot*, and *Peter*, were blown down) that can avoid the fascinations either of flattery, or of falsehood of the Parasite or Calumniator? Who can resist the force, or withstand the mischief of such insinuating Words, as the Lyers Lips enter the Soul withal?

The *Siren's* of the World, the *Circe's* of the Devil, and all the Idols of Sensuality may sooner be pat's'd by, and more easily got from
by

by the exercise of Prudence, by the rules of Reason, and by the restraint of Laws, than the snares that are laid by a deceitful wicked Mouth. And these are so much the more invincible and unavoidable, by how much they are invisible and unknown, being spread over with the specious pretences either of Piety, or of Friendship.

The other mischiefs of this frail state here, may be grievous, dangerous, and mortal, but none so comparably to a false, malicious, and dissembling Tongue, which is a painted Sepulchre, full of nothing but Emptiness, Rotteness, Hollownes, and precipices instead of Amity, Righteousness, Holiness, and Piety, which it so much pretends to, as that it oftentimes intraps the most just and innocent, and tramples them under the feet of Calumny and Disgrace.

But O what fruit have you in those things whereof you may be now ashamed? O ye perfidious Deeds! What Pleasure, what Profit, what Honour do ye gather from your Lyes, and from your falsehoods. O ye deceitful Men? Do ye Flatterers (who are the most venomous tame Beasts) look for reward, or hope for praise, or expect immunities? No, no, your Company is too Pernicious, your Teeth too Poysonous, your Sin too Presumptuous, to expect any thing from Heaven but Hate and Vengeance.

For the Javelin's darted from a strong and steady arm gash not the Flesh with deeper wounds than the Words of a treacherous and faithless Tongue pierce the Soul of the ingenious to the quick. The glowing Coals of Juniper, (which have the singular property of keeping Fire) do not reserve, or afford so much heat as an evil Tongue can throw upon our affections, for that (saith the Apostle) is set on fire of Hell.

Wherefore, my God, I trust while thou dost rain down Plagues upon such sacrilegious Sinners (as thou didst upon Sodom and Gomorrah, thou wilt preserve my soul (as thou didst righteous Lot's) that was vexed with the wicked Conversation of his Neighbours) so that I may not be overthrown amongst the Pits of Dissimulation, nor be shipwrack'd in those unstable Waters, where many a wise Pilot hath been cast away.

Lord! I would not run on the shelves of such persuasions, as drive men on further to their own Ruin: But by the wonted effects of thy Omnipotence, deliver me from those mistrusts and misunderstandings that (too much indulging the impotence of Nature) take off the Man from doing his Devoir, and from obeying thy Commands; and stays him amongst sinful Complacencies and Delights.

Against such, O Lord, arm thy just wrath, and let thy disdain strike them on the Mouths, who full of mischief and deceit become the burying places of others fame and reputation.

O let the arrows of such curled Tongues, and the Coals of their traiterous Mouths, become Thunder-bolts to chastise their malice; and lightning, to flash for ever in their Faces, and fire to punish their Offences everlastingly.

And here now, Lord, the multitude of my Crimes committed at the instance of Sacrilegious Tongues, comes (with their Curses) fresh into my mind. Here the remorses of my Conscience tell me of the Sins (and Plagues) I have contracted by my compliance with their vain conceits (and company) who have too frequently taken me off from the performance of my Duty, and the observation of thy Holy Laws.

Woe is me, wicked Wretch ! O how weak ! O how miserable am I ! Like the Prodigal, I have stay'd too long from home, from my Father's Mansion ; from thy Love and Protection ! And alas, How long have I stay'd in a strange Land, and rebelled, like *Abalom*, in the sight of the Sun, before Heaven, and against Thee, O God ! Declaring my self no Son, that I might be a Slave to the Tyranny of my basest Affections, and a Traitor to my Sovereign Lord ! Surely, much too long and most unhappy hath been my Travel through this Wilderness, where I have made Woldly-mindedness my sole Companion ; so that I may say too too many, because Evil have been the Days of my Pilgrimage.

And surely, no greater mishap can befall a Man, than to find himself out-lawed from thy Care, and made a Vagabond, like *Cain*, in the Land of *Aberrations*, under the Rule of Evil Spirits, and among his own Deceivings and Temptations ; such evil Companions as may well be termed *Arabians*, from the Rudeness of their Behaviour, the Badness of their Neighbourhood, the darkness and deformity of their appearances, whereby (that Dove) the Soul, that is conversant amongst them, is blacked and sullied, as if she had layen among the Pots, and lost her silver Wings, and is by so much the more unpleasant and unfit for the Eyes of thy Purity, by how much the more pains thou hast took to make thy *Psyche* without spot or blemish, or any such thing, as the ugliness of Vice disguises the Soul withal.

Free me therefore, O merciful Lord, from the iniquity and perverseness of those Tongues that have not known the way of Peace, nor had they known it, would have loved it ; because, like the grand Enemy in the Gospel, they are continually sowing the Seeds of Hatred, and the Teeth of Discord.

Nay, while they wear the Vizards of kindness and of peaceableness, they conspire treacherously against the welfare of such as would adore and serve Thee.

Such Tongues, O God, flattering the sensual Appetite, subjugate Reason unto it, and make falsehood and blasphemies so allyed to them, as that although they veil the mischief of their deformities, they cannot hide them. For, Can these *Aethiopians* change their Skins ? No, they will appear the Black Sons of *Cham*, and like Leopards, full of Spots, let them daub over their Actions never so deceitfully.

Lord, I wish that my Soul, being wholly devoted to Peace, may thereby join it self to thy favour, and not stray at all from thy Commandments, but carefully trace thy divine Examples.

O Blessed Jesu ! Thou hast born so good a Will to Man, as to will Peace on Earth, as well as in Heaven, that Glory may be to God in the Highest. Thou didst teach on the Mount, how that Hatred should be banish'd, that Envy (not Justice) should fly from Earth, and that Prayers should be put up for all, even for our Persecutors, and Kindness reserved for our very Enemies.

Thou gavest thy Apostles Peace for the best Present thou couldst make them on Earth ; Thou didst leave them Peace for a Legacy, when thou wentest hence, and they shall receive from Thee everlasting Peace for their felicity in Heaven.

At thy Birth, the Angels were Heralds, who proclaimed a General Peace ; And what did thy bitter Death bring, but the sweetest pacification ? As the first Words at thy Resurrection were of Peace.

But

But Gracious God, if thou deliverest me not from that *Ishmaelite*, (who pursues me with deadly hatred) and from his Children, who follow him in Flatteries and Accusations: I see, alas! the Repose of my Soul is so much broken by their Assaults, and its own Impotencies, as that it may despair of Safety. Because, without Divine Assistance, no body can resist the Witchcraft of those Tongues, that are the Fire-brands of the Devil, and by his instigation, like the Fool in the Proverbs, throw about Fire and darts, and (as if in jeast) work nothing but mischief and deceit.

The second Step upon the second PSALM of Degrees, being the 121 PSALM.

Levavi Oculos.

O My Soul! What dost thou look at? What dost thou look for? What dost thou look after? Whence spring the Hopes which yield some ease to the Troubles and Evils of thy Condition? Who is he that can deliver thee from the Arrests of Justice? Where wilt thou be secured from the Thunder of Divine Vengeance? See round about thee, nay within thee there are Ten thousand Witnesses (who are accusers also) of the Exorbitances of thy Passion. Observe both by the late and sad Chastisements of others (not so bad as thy self) how ready the abused Patience of the Almighty is to change it self into Fury at thy continued provocations. Is not thy Conscience gnawing thee like a Vulture? and ready to fly in thy very Face to reprehend the vanity of thy desires, the extravagance of thy Appetite, the blindness of thy Affection, and the infidelity of thy Opinions? Therefore gape no longer after the Tantalizing fruit of *Sodom*; stare not at the Tinsell Glories of this World; but lift up thy Spiritual Eyes in Love, and Prayer, and Contemplation, to the Rock of Ages, to the utmost bounds of the everlasting Hills, to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, those Mountains of perfection who inclose within the bowels of their Love all the Treasures of Wisdom and Holiness, and the only means of our Salvation.

Look up unto the top of this *Pisgah* and see all that blessed Land; see from this Summit how those lower Heights who never feel the showers of our Sorrows, nor fear the clouding of their Heads in Darkness, I mean the Beatified Saints and Angels (who have such glorious Elevations through the Magnetick force of God's goodness upon theirs) that like the Hill of the Lord they are venerably to be regarded, and though thy weak sight can reach no higher than these Hills; O learn from these thy Fellow-creatures the vast distance of thine own unworthiness! when but compared even to them in whom thou hast found Folly, and be confounded with Shame at thy

far grosser failings, so shalt thou learn to turn off the Thorns of the Flesh, to turn out the Love of the World, and to turn away the Messengers of Satan.

Thou shalt learn the right Methods of a sincere and incorrupt Life, thou shalt learn to behold, and beholding admire that Hight of Glory that is above, and admiring thou shalt learn to get up to that innumerable Company of Saints and Angels already gone to an eternal Passover before the Lord in his Holiest Sion, and thou shalt not only have the Ministry of Angels but the help and protection of that great Angel of the Covenant the Holy *Jesus*, to guid thee up safely unto thole who are gone before.

But since, O most gracious God! the Aids which thy Creatures afford are but instrumental and Ministerial, without force or advantage, but by thy Will and Permission.

I therefore look from them unto Thee directly, having recourse to thy Pity only, and imploring thy Assistance.

Thou art my Creator, my Redeemer, my Comforter; my God and my Rock, if thou shouldst reject my Supplications, to which of the Saints should I turn to offer them up?

If Thou shouldst deny a Remedy for my weak Condition, from what Angel? or from what *Bethesda* could I hope for succor?

If Thou, who art the Fountain of goodness, shouldst deny me to drink freely of the Waters of Life (for the restitution and repair of my Spiritual health) from what peculiar Stream or Cistern could one become so Loathsome and despicable, by reason of Infirmities, as I am, from whom, I say, could such a one as I expect a draught, nay so little as a drop of Comfort?

'Tis true Lord! my yielding to the guidance of a blind Leader hath subjected the liberty of my Will to the Tyranny of my Senses, and These adoring some weak and brittle reflexion of thy Loveliness, (in the fading beauty of some dying Objects) have made Earth my Heaven, and so engaged me amongst worldly enjoyments, as to give me neither List nor Leisure to regard the delights above; but a Cloud of terrene satisfactions (which will soon vanish as a Mist) have taken my *Jesus*, my true Joy, out of my sight: and I must confess, I have been less willing to look on the feasting and refreshing Vessels of Heavenly Joys, than God hath been to prepare a Table, and to let down a Banquet for my Soul.

O! how have I scornfully passed by, and turned my head away from the good *Samaritan*? When my Saviour hath bowed down his Head, even unto my Ear, and called upon me thus,

"Is it nothing unto thee, O thou that passest by? Is it nothing
"that I have unbarred Heaven Gates for thee, and broken down
"the Gates of Hell? Behold and see quite through my Body, how
"the way to Paradise lies open to you: and since there are so many
"passages made thither for Sinners through my Wounds and Heart,
"why will you not believe that I am the Way.

O my dear God! I cannot excuse either my neglects or infidelity; but I know our grievous offences do Crown the glorious Actings of thy goodness, and the innumerable Train of those who are conquered by thy clemencies do make such splendid Triumphs in Heaven as thou most delightest in:

The wondrous Frame and machine of the Heavens, the spacious Theatre of the Earth, with all the movements and spectators round about them, is the great Ball thou givest unto rational considerations, and was the work of thy Hands alone.

Nothing it self was matter enough for thy Omnipotency, from whence to build up the mighty Fabrick of the Universe. So that by the same power thou didst Create, thou mayst also Relieve and Redeem me from the Miseries wherein I am plunged by my Sins.

Without thy most Divine Assistance all my good intentions flag and vary from the strict observance of thy Commands. My Nature habituated and grown old in Evil, wanting thy help on every side, finds the Precipices of its endless Ruin. Thou only O my God! mayst withhold my falling, uphold my weak endeavours, and raise me out of the Gulphs of my Condition which is sinking down to the lowermost Hell.

Under the safeguard of thy friendly Aspect mine Eyes fear not the blinding of themselves on Sublunary Glories, my Tongue dares not Profane it self with the vain discourse of this loose Age, my Feet will not follow the motions of the Flesh, my Hands will find themselves obliged to pious Actions, and my Ears will not admit of other sounds than such as Echo forth thy greatness and thy Glories.

'Tis so indeed, most dear Redeemer! that under the Banner of thy Love I fear not the Forces of those Enemies both to thy Cross and to my Crowning, I am sure the Captain of my Salvation will put to flight whole Armies of those aliens of vain and intemperate affections who would Lord it over thine Inheritance, O Lord! and thou wilt heal my backslidings so, as that Sin shall not be finished to bring forth Death eternal.

Comfort thy self then O my Soul! that the care of God in preserving of men is so great as not to let him seem to slumber when thou hast occasion of thy Shepherds Staff; nor will he prove such a stupid Patron as Baal did, when intreated by his Votaries.

But if thy greater provocations hinder not his pity, this will ever be at hand to support, to supply thy deficiency; and we have no reason to doubt or deny the effects of his Vigilance who with such unwearied and constant attendance makes the Angels wait upon our Motions.

Nay, although we leave, and tire God by our Sins, yet for all our wilfull Defections and Errors God hath never yet left or abandoned us.

This great Eye of the Universe is never closed, never blinded by our juggling, never imposed upon by appearances, never heavy with Sleep; he decks the Glories of his goodness with the particular kindness which he hath for the Sons of Men.

If then the Majesty of the most High not only by the Actings of his bounty, but by the Ministry of his Angels thus guards and governs, aids and accompanies frail Humanity, how comes it to pass O my Soul! that thy Affections run from such Fellowship, from such Defence to expose themselves to the Shadows of Vanity, or the dangers of Sensuality?

Why dost thou venture thy self so alone like Hagar in a barren Wilderness far from Heaven, from Angels, and from God, to seek

for Earthly satisfactions, or to let a servile corrupt Wilfulness domineer over thee?

O resist stoutly the assaults of the common Enemy, who (if it were possible) would allay the scorching of his own flames by throwing thee and other Souls into them. Therefore quench the violence of those Tendencies that sink thy Soul down from Heaven. Master the power of such Affections, as despoiling thee of thy most noble part would cloath thee with the filthy Raggs of Sin: and then fear not Soul! for God is with thee.

Indeed Lord, if my frailties did not rob me of the favour, thou shouldst be my Master, teaching me the things which belong unto my peace, Thou shouldst be my Guide, not only unto but through Paradise. Thou shouldst be my safe Conuoy to defeat the Enemy of his rejoicing at my falls. Thou also shouldst be my keeper to detourne me from the Snares which are daily spread for me by the pleasures of Sense: and I am weak (as *Hezekiah* once said) Lord do thou undertake for me. Take upon thee my Guardianship and thou shalt see how valiantly I will resist all the Temptations of the Devil. If thy most powerful Arm dost shield my tender Heart, O Lord! what Power, though ever so insolent, dares shoot an Arrow or throw a Dart against it? If thy Right-hand be my Support, what Force can over-turn me? Heaven hath no Thunder, Earth hath never a Mouth, nor Hell it self an Abyffe for such as sit under the shadow of the Almighty. When the great God sets his Hand to the Charter of our Protection, or to the securing of our safety, what alteration can all the changes of the World make on us? None, not any, *Non si ruat Orbis*: We cannot wander as e'rewhile from his mind, nor so grossly transgress his Precepts.

Rejoice then O my Soul! that God hath undertook thy defence by all his Divine care and industry, and hath made his Son a Hostage for our security, while he continually holds thee up by the outstretched Arm of his Favour.

O most Glorious God! it is thou alone that rulest all the Motions, the Ragings, the Madnes of the World, and its Elements. Thou sittest above the Heavens, (saith the *Psalmist*) thou presidest over all thy Works by thy Power and Mercy, so that thou canst allay the force of every Influence in such an Almighty sort as that the Sun shall have no feavourish Darts, nor the Moon any malignant Aspects to cast on those who are shielded by thy Protection.

The Fire in its own quality is so violent and greedy, as never to say it hath enough, but after it hath devoured all in its way is ready to feed (like *Envy*) on it self; how is it by the Heavenly Providence tempered in its unbridled Nature, and restrained from doing Mischief, as held in from destroying both it self and others?

What shall I then say of those Flames of sensuality, those Fits of Intemperance, those Epilepsies of Lasciviousness, those Rapes and Violences committed upon (and much against) our own Constitutions, which without a singular effect of Divine Clemency would soon torment and consume our Nature.

And who is there but some time or other plays the *Curtius*, and desperately throws himself into the Gulph of Danger, rather than he will offer to turn the Stream of Pravity, which carries away our Affections

Affections so much the more precipitously and mischievously, as we allow, in Natural and Born ~~w~~ us. What force then O Lord! without thy Sovereign help can bear the Shock of Ambition, or bridle the fury of Passions, or resist the Assaults of Lust? Thou alone, most Gracious God! mayest enlighten the blindness of my Mind, enable the weakness of my Heart, and invigorate the desperate estate of my Soul.

He that thinks to go out by himself in his own strength alone against the Uncircumcised Enemies of our Peace, he knows not what he hath about him; how unprovided he is of Armour, and of Force to encounter such Giants as may defeat him even by the falleriness of his own Nature. Man of himself being now so entangled, (in his own Land as it were) so hampered by his depraved and carnal Sense, as that his very presuming to fight his Adversary with his own sorry Weapons, is the shewing but of his Pride and Weakness, (the faults charged on *David*, and the Sins of *Goliath*) the defying of the Most High, and the disgracing the Armies of the Living God.

My safety therefore shall depend onely upon Gods defence, whose continual Guard and seasonable Reliefs, free me from the injurious Accidents happening in the Day or in the Night. So that all my time and life finds it self exempt, or secured from such continual Perils as are encountered in an Age so full of Sin and Violence, and therefore so full of Miseries as this Present is.

O how doest thou disarm the furiousness of my Enemies, and of the whole Creation, Dearest Lord? How dost thou stop the Mouths of the fiercest Monsters? (which are opened against Mankind since the Fall.) It is thou who dost blunt the Cruelties of Thieves and Tyrants, and calmest the most violent Stormes, and humblest the most Lofty Pride. All Misfortunes, all Disasters, all Calamities are overcome by thy Power, and made beneficial to us by thy Providence.

Continue therefore thy Favours towards my poor Soul, which oppressed by the weight of its Earthly-mindedness sinks down into the Pit without the support of thy Love. ~~O~~ Recover it as thou didst *Hezekiah's*, and see how the Devil (that is ever employing his usual Malice) is allways in Ambush, or in open War against her. With the Complacencies of the Appetite he Charms her, with the Heats of Ambition he Chafes her, with the Pleasures of Sense he Diverts, with the Snares of Beauty he Entraps, and with the Glories of the World he quite dazles me, frail Mortal, so that being near lost and carried away by his cunning Devices (of which I would not be longer ignorant, O Lord!) I struggle with the utmost effort to break away from the specious promises and puissance of my Adversary, that my Mind may not be debauched by the fair shews of the Flesh, nor my Soul enslaved to the unreasonable passions of the Body: But that she may fly to thy Aid, imploring thy Succor, and sheltering me under the Wings of thy Protection.

Surely, dear Lord! I have not tired out thy Pity, for all the Maladies of my Heart do want a continual Medicine; and un-interrupted applications of a Divine Hand; grant therefore O my God! through thine immediate Care and infinite Commiseration the whole course of my Life may be so directed as that I may observe thy Commands, and the end of my Designs may be wholly thy Glory; the Scope of my Desires, thy Service, and thy Love, the Center of my Affections.

May the bright Emanations of thy Grace so shine upon my doings, as they having their beginning and end under thy Favour, nothing may draw me from thy Laws, or from my hopes of Happiness.

In a special manner do I begg thy Help O dear Redeemer! in that hour when the Man being attacked with the Horrors of Death, grows faint and weary (like Thirsting *Sampson*) and is in danger of quitting the Field to his greatest Foes and most dangerous Assailants. In that blackest hour (which is the Power of Darkness) oh let me have thy clearest Guidance! O let me have that supernatural Assistance which the most dreadful Conflicts do require.

And now cheer up my Soul with the assurance that thou hast recommended thy self unto a faithful Creator, who will keep thee to the uttermost, and defend thy proceedings. He will not suffer thee to loose the excellency of thy first being, nor to be always blurred with the Sordidness of Earth. He can Seal up all thy Faculties in the Contemplation of his Greatness, and having blessed the Periods of thy Life here, will promote thee to Glory in the Ages of Eternity. *AMEN.*

The third Step upon the Third PSALM of Degrees, being the 122 PSALM.

Latatus sum in his, &c.

O My God! what greater Consolation can a Soul receive here than to be fed with the Hopes of enjoying thy Divine presence hereafter? The Mirth of this World is so mixed, so dashed with Vanity or Repentance, that 'tis no wayes comparable to what Eternal Beatitude can promise. Honours and Earthly Grandeurs are overloaded with the burthen of observances, dissimulations and business, Worldly Riches are accompanied with Labour, Snares, and Vexatious Contests. The delights of sense are vanished almost before enjoyed, and of them nothing remains afterward but dissatisfaction. All the goods of Nature or of Fortune are very fraile and momentary proving their felicities but vain and phantastick.

But the enjoyment of the Light of Gods Countenance, the introduction into the privy Chambers of Heaven which are hanged with Eternity, and furnished with all real good is so great a favour, so inestimable a Jewel, so unparell'd an advantage, as that the Soul it self cannot comprehend much less the tongue express it.

How am I then arrived? O dear Redeemer! to a blessed pitch of Confidence by considering though I find my self a very unworthy Sinner yet I may come (as I am call'd) into the Land of the living, into the Kingdom of Heaven, and when this Earthly Tabernacle shall be dissolved

ved, I shall have a Throne, a Seat, a Building not made with hands, Eternal in the Heavens.

What greater happiness? O my God! can a Soul promise it self, then by seconding thy divine Commands, be secure of inheriting such a Throne, such a Seat, such a Kingdom in the portion of the blessed? and in the presence of Saints and Angels Communicate of thy own Greatness, and of thy Glory? What delights can equal those of the Celestial Paradise? Speak no more of an Earthly one, for what satisfactions may keep pace with the Vision of my God? (*Adam* himself could but view his works in the Universe.) But,

O thou great Ineffable, Incomprehensible, Transcendent! Wilt thou ever become the Object of those Eyes that have been prophaned by Worldly Spectacles? In thy presence is Life, full Content, and endless Joys, and these I shall as fully possess, (being instated by thy Favour) as Angels or other perfect Spirits have them, so my desires shall be still feasted with the Contemplation of thy Goodness, and my affections shall triumph in their eternal enjoyments and the insatiable Nature of my Soul and sense will find enough to entertain and quiet them in the infinite Treasure of thy Love and Wisdom.

But because he deserves no admission into the Closets of the Righteous who hath made his abode amongst the Carnalities of the World and enslaved his reason to the service of sin. "I pray thee most gracious God, to stay the feet of my longings from going up too hastily, too rashly: Hold my thoughts yet longer upon the Reflection of my own demerits, and then afterward fix them on the sole contemplation of Heavenly things, so I shall better find the Obligation I have to serve thee with pure intentions, and suitable operations and not continue still only fit to be shut out of the new *Jerusalem* that is above.

That *Jerusalem* I mean whose walls are built up of several orders of Vertues, whose stately Pallaces are reared by the Law of *Moses*, the Revelations of the Prophets, and the labours of the Apostles, the sufferings and Patience of Saints, and the power of the Gospel, wherein the glorious Majesty of Christ Resides, and the best Apartments are set off with Love and Charity, and the Angels are the bright Courtiers; Thrones, Dominions and Powers, chief Officers, Arch-Angels the Guards, and the blest inhabitants are the just made perfect.

What then should a man do? or rather what should he not do or suffer, to get to this *Jerusalem* above? O my Soul! thou must know that Heaven is a free and General native Countrey, that is arrived at not by nobleness of Birth, nor by the pride of Life or living, not by the glories of Ancestors, nor by the Wealth nor Honours of the Earth, but by the Holiest Acts of our desires, the sincerity of the Heart, the temperance of the Tongue, and the Righteousness of our Actions.

Here then my Soul fix all thy Complacencies; thou hast already cloy'd thy appetite on the momentary pleasures of a short Life, and thou findest how brief they are in the fruition, how bitter in the recantation of them.

Get up therefore, get up to this new *Jerusalem* which the pity and goodness of my God doth promise thee, while by his infinite Mercies he lets thee taste the fruit of his planting, the wonderful Conjunctions of Faith and eternal Glories, and will let thee partake of the chief good (that common portion of such as are found worthy to be called the children of God.)

Hast thou no reason then, O Soul! to give thy self up absolutely to the goodness of my God? what should hinder or impeach thy submission? is not this due to the merits of his goodness and to the demerits of thy former Operations? Yea surely by so much the more art thou oblig'd to his service, by how much the more his bounties have been extended towards thee. Therefore after all this his payment of thy debt of transgressions, I find thee bound more fast to thy debt of Duty, to fear Gods Power, to adore his Majesty, to be humbled for my Pride, and ashamed of my follies.

Heaven is no place thou knowest for the unclean, there are none but Innocents or Penitents, such as have needed no Repentance or else have used it.

O thou most gracious Monarch of the World! whosoever pretends to approach thy Throne, to partake of thy Glories, or to enter into thy garden of Life: He must of necessity be installed with the Vesture of thy Grace and be stript of all Earthly compliances which so intangle men amongst the snares of Offences or the miseries of this Life.

All they who to this time have stay'd in the Presence-chamber of the Heav'n of Heavens, have been signalized with the special characters of thy Love (without which all our indeavours are alike Blind and fruitless,) they alone have gained that place and honour, by the sincerity of their Consciences, by the purity of their Lives, by the cleanness of their hands in thy sight O Lord, as saith the *Psalmist*.

Let this be owned by (those Children of *Israel*, those chosen people and that Royal Priesthood of Thine,) who being advanced to an heavenly height by the steps of their Vertues, have made thy greatness (conjoyn'd with thy goodness) to be Ecchoed through the Universe, to the shame and confusion of others more oblig'd who notwithstanding they be enriched by millions of Benefits yet know not how to respect the Donor, acknowledg the Gift, or sanctifie thy Holy name therewithall.

Lord I am sensible of the backwardness of my Heart to any gratefulness, it is conscious of it's own Guilt, and would now go no farther till it hath confest, how the observation of thy Commands hath been the least of its care, and thy Love, (which ought to have been the first desire of my Heart) hath by my ignorance been so neglected, as that the fading sparks of a beautiful look have more easily inflamed it then thy presence.

As many Objects as have been offered to my sense, became so many Idols, to the which my passions were devoted.

Thy divinest Name hath been cast out of my Mouth in a Thousand vain asseverations, and these have been uttered to no other end, then to give Credence to the vanity of my intentions, or the falsehood of my Speeches. How then, can these Eyes, these Ears, these Hands, these words of mine, plead themselves guiltless of any Crime? since they have or would have offended in all, and this conviction of my own guilt, frights me with the thoughts of thy coming with thy Holy ones to judge the World, lest I be then found in the number of such profane wretches as shall be shut forth of thy Celestial Mansions.

I therefore dread that last and great Assizes of thy Saints, most glorious God I fear that general Summons, and the Assembly of thy first born, lest when that Bench sits upon the examination of my
Actions

Actions and Omissions, how I have neglected the directions of their Doctrine, and not imitated the goodness of their Manners, nor traced the footsteps of their Charity, nor admired the proofs of their Patience: "I being so vile a sinner, (such reprobate silver) may be rejected, for if I "am apprehended without the wedding garment of Christs righteousness, I have nothing to say for my self, no plea to make, saving the "inexpressible desire of my poor Soul, not to be excluded with Doggs, "but to enter into the Holyest City the new *Jerusalem*.

I confess good Lord, that I have neither worth nor will, to follow the conducts of thy grace, nor to arrive at thy Favour: all the courses of my Life have been great aggravations of my guiltiness, for I have slighted thy Omnipotency, by prideing my self in thy extraordinary gifts. The very sight and heat of the Sun have appeared, not the Loanes of thy peculiar bounty but things made on purpose for my convenience.

The return and pleasure of each season, hath been reckon'd the unavoidable actings of sublunary Creatures. Thunder, Lightning, and storms of Hail, were too often counted the necessary effects of second causes. Thus Brutish have I been, thus blind and yet I knew full well there would not be a Breath of Air, nor so much as a leaf wag unless it were by thy appointment, that makes every Creature live and move and have a Being.

Yet alas, for all I can so speciously declare this, I must confess also that many a time when my tongue undertook to disclose thy Name, with the due Attributes of thy greatness, my wild heart hath then withheld its assent, and been ready to give the lye to my speech.

Since therefore all that I can say of my self speaks me very guilty before thee O Lord, I Plead, not any Merits but those of my Saviours Passions, not any goodness but that of thy Divine Nature, afford me these, through thy Grace, and then I shall have that peace (which is an inseparable accident to it) I shall have such a Magazine of blessing as may render my Soul like a strong fortress, well provided against the assaults of the World, and the snares of the Devil.

Gratious Lord! I have often begg'd the favour of thy mercy to draw me out of that wretched state of my prevarications, and from the slavery of Concupiscence, and from the Tyranny of evil habits, I know how weak, how blind, how false or infirme, our own Nature finds it self at the best, and therefore he that supposeth (without the assistance of thy goodness, without the armour of thy Grace, without the encouragement of thy Love,) either to quell the impetuosity of his Lusts, or to get up to the holy Hill, destroying like a *Jonathan* all his enemies in his way, such a one must surely be more than a Man, or mistakes himself grossly; for he should know 'tis only from the excess of thy pitty, that a sinner is turned from the evil of his way.

The prodigal soul that hath long strayed, can never make up its losses nor mend its condition, unless it be by the inexhausted treasures of thy Grace.

Help me therefore, and redeem me from the power of Satan unto God, that being intrusted with thy Talents I may shew forth to all thy manifold goodness, and tender Bowels of Compassions so that sinners (many with my self) may be farther converted unto Thee, and by my example inflamed with thy Love, renounce

Earthly Toyes, and pay thy Clemency the due Tribute of penitential Tears.

And from whence dear God! art ^{thou} yet more glorified then by forgiving us poor sinners? Thy mercies are likewise a guide for ours, since all the Acts of thy goodness and kindness, may in some degree be imitated by man. He was formed after thy Image, and the more just and holy he is, the more doth he approach unto Thee. That Prince who best resembles God on Earth, must own his power to reward or to punish from thy special grant O Jesu.

The Martyrs have essayed to copy out thy patience, the Virgins thy purity, Confessors thy truth, and Hermits thy Innocence. "But
"alafs! How far short are they of the Original? They have represented thy image as St. *Paul* speaks but as in a glass very darkly, and
"deficiently. For as the Heavens are higher then the Earth so far
"more excellent are thy operations and affections then ours,

"The proofes of thy goodness are infinitely Transcendent and inexpressible, rather to be admired then exemplified, and did not all the
"Prerogatives of Heaven and Earth, concur to set forth thy greatness
"and to speak thee the Lord of Hosts: Yet thy goodness alone would
"describe thee most admirably according as thou declaredst thy self
"to *Moses*, the Lord, the Lord merciful and gracious, slow to anger
"and abundant in truth and goodness.

Therefore extend these glorious attributes towards my relief, and advance thy lovely Titles, by the forgiveness of my sins, I have no farther cause to urge, but that by how much the more unworthy my Soul is of pardon, by so much the more will thy pity be ador'd in the pardoning of me.

The fourth Step on the fourth PSALM of Degrees, being the 123 PSALM.

Ad te Levavi, &c.

Come Lord! O come and and help my sinking Soul, that being scar'd with many troublefom Illusions, will let me fall (I doubt) into the dark of sin, I have experienced to my cost how much the ill propensities of my Nature corrupt my sentiments, and habituating me to the relish of temptation, almost persuade me 'tis impossible to resist.

I live indeed with my self, far from my self, at such a distance from a good mind, as to be without the neighbourhood or acquaintance of my own bad one.

Self love deludes me with false reflexes and gives to vice it self the surname of Vertue, it makes me a self-deceiver and a gross flatterer of my own opinions, so that I am apt to spare and connive at my self in

in the midst of my greatest delinquencies; but not to entertain my self any longer among the miseries I contract, nor to cast away my life too blindly amongst errors. I lift up the Eyes of my Soul to the light of thy divine Presence, and with a steady Faith, a lively Hope, a most ardent Love, a fixed Contemplation, a strong Patience, and a sincere Endeavour, I implore thy Assistance, and intreat thy Mercy.

My sight hath lost its ability in regarding worldly Objects, and I would not enjoy any other Visive faculty, but that which thy wonderful grace may afford me, let him aim and look at dirt, who full of earthly designs waits for all his comforts here below, I who for my part store my chiefest Treasure of bliss and solace in a Heav'n above, turn all my thoughts and my affections towards thee, who art my only Lord and Master; I have ventured again to lift up these two doores of mine eyes, these humble gates of vision, even to the lofty Throne of thy Majesty, and my desires have made bold to enter like *Esher* unto *Artaxerxes*, even into the Cabinet of thy graces and glories; unto the bosome of thy Love Christ Jesus, and they have found admittance hitherto by the confidence thy goodness, and pity doth afford Them in a Saviour.

I acknowledg my self like an humble slave that waits for pardon of his faults, Relief of his necessities, protection from injuries, freedom from his chains, deliverance from further persecutions, in a word I expect through thee my dear Redeemer Jesus whatsoever may advantage my outward man, or felicitate my inward. I am not for retiring any farther from thy presence like a guilty *Cain*, since it is by the light of thy countenance, by the favour of thy grace, that I would chase away the thick clouds of my sins, and never more loose the light of thee, my Father which art in Heaven, &c.

"Thou art the Chariot of *Israel* and the horsemen thereof, the putting thee far away from us, is the foolish and desperate attempt of looking God, of losing his favour indeed as *Jonas* once did to meet with what is monstrously Horrid, but not of getting out of thy sight (as that Prophet did experiment) for though we goe down into Hell: There art Thou also and thine eye can reach us.

is the wickedness of folly. Eccl. 7: 25.

Therefore will I keep mine eye fixed on thee: O thou Father and fountain of Lights! and will fear to fall under any such eclipses as thy displeasure, or my transgressions may bring upon me. I was once so hoodwinckt by the pleasures of sin, as to be led about fondly by the false glitterings of the World, I have been dazled by a frail Womans beauty so as to think there hath been no Heaven like a kind look from her, nor have I look'd at any other happiness, then hath shone from ~~from~~ her eyes, which were two wandering stars alas, which in a little space of time must set without hopes of shineing out again.

My blind ambition carried me no farther then mortals praises and my designs smelt of the ground from whence they sprang, my passions grew not feebler while my person did but waxed more robust as I grew older, and when I became nearer to my end (and had less need of worldly entertainments such as wealth and honour,) then I became more greedy after them.

How base is that mental Idolatry inflaves us to the worship of that which hath it self no more value then is given by the opinion of some foolish adorers? and as the femal graces of shape or complexion come

Psal. 92.
13. as it were by accident, so these are subje ct to ten Thousand casualties ~~from them~~, neither gave these to the selves, nor can keep them, (unless by great deceit and Colour.) I now see what phantasmes all those honours are, which are sought with great pain, possess'd with fear, and lost again with torment.

Therefore dearest God! I am returning to thee and leaving worldly pomps and passions, to thee alone address my prayers, my desires and my vows. I will be like those Domesticks, who serve faithfully and and seek Diligently to please their Lord, by minding his business, and his beck, that they may please and profit him to the utmost.

Psal. 19.

I will attend with longing eyes for thy favour and pardon, and look to thy mercy seat, while I cast not a glance upon the glories of the world (as I have done, that Basilisk shall no more invenome my life by its regards, but shall be trampled under the feet of my contrition; luxury, and vain glory, shall be trod down into the dust as low as Humility can lay them or me; and the richest intrals of both Indies shall have no treasures big enough to bribe my desires from the service of thy Heavenly Majesty.

Have mercy then, O gracious Lord! have mercy on thy poor indebted steward, and deliver me from the evil of this defect and transgression, both from sin and suffering by grace and glory.

If thou dost not by the transcendencies of thy power and goodness, free me from the miseries of my guilt, and restore me to some degree of pardon (which is Innocence in thy sight) where can I firm my hopes, from whom can I expect Salvation?

I was form'd according to thy Image, imbellished with thy resemblance in a superfluity of spiritual and temporal indowments, and yet I could not for all this preserve my selfe in a state of purity or safety: So that without the renew'd favours of thy goodness, I might expect nothing but thunders and lightnings from the Throne, and flashes from the lake that burns for ever. Without thy Assistance O my God! I am afraid of thy foregoing promises, that I shall not be able to keep my word with thee, nor keep my heart from worldly lusts, for indeed I have found my spirit running out of it self too often, into the Arms of sin and mischief; frail humane nature being utterly disabled from maintaining thy favour, without thy overruling grace.

I am not a little sensible of the impotent commotions of my Soul, and the frequent domineering of my passions, sometimes Ambition drives me after the seeking a trouble (which our ignorance calls a Title) of Honour. Sometimes I am wrackt with suspicion of disgrace, or I hunt after reputation by any means but by godliness. Now I am afraid of dying, or of leaving that to the earth which was borrowed of her for me: anon I am vex'd in the possession or acquett of Riches which some call felicities, others find to be torments, and then complain of any slight mischance as if these happened without thy providence, or were not produced by my demerits.

Thus my state doth sufficiently experience, each excess of humane wretchedness by the agitation of my faculties to my disturbance or danger, nor without thy help and mercy, Lord can I find how to get out of this wretched condition, nor how to keep my self well if I were out.

My weak shoulders stoop under the weight of thy commands as if these

these were like my sins too heavy for me to bear; and my corruptions exhale matter continually to cross my resolutions, of not offending thee.

Stay therefore O Lord, and take the sword of thy Spirit, and stop the way for me. Stretch forth thy hand above the fury of mine adversaries, and shield me with thine arm against them.

Let not the fiery darts of my Concupiscences divert or prevent thy bounties or turn thy patience into displeasure. For (as I have said before) I must again acknowledg, that (without thy continual aid) I shall become a prey to their force and malice who (to the disparagement of thy power) would in spite of it subdue and enslave me.

The Fifth Step on the Fifth PSALM of Degrees, being the 124 PSALM.

Nisi quia Dominus, &c.

IF in defence of my known weakness, thy power O God! were not provided with a like infinity of commiseration, and if this did not seasonably come in to my relief, how should I stem the tide of Passions which dangerously swells up my breast? what would become of me in such a deluge as they would throw upon me? Ah! let the purest Soul confess, and the choicest Spirits acknowledg together with the Elect and confirmed Angels: that if the Holyness of a Saviour had not shelter'd theirs; if Jesus had not bid the Waves and Winds be quiet and obey him; who of them all might not have sunk down and perished in the stormy Lake? Had not Christ hallow'd the proud storms of our Passions, had he not quell'd the miseries of this life, who could have born them? who amongst us could have rid safe through such tempests? or have held out against such attacks as the sin beleaguerr'd Soul incounters? None could have promised ease or a sanctuary to our vex'd minds, none could have reach'd to the serenities of Heaven.

Our strength is weakness (say the Scriptures) if not strengthn'd by divine supplies. The Mettal, or condition of our humanity is too brittle to be trusted, if not back'd by the author of our Salvation.

Keep therefore with my heart continually O God! that the Image of thy Son may not fall in darkness or in the shadow of death, nor that soul be lost for which he took to himself a body.

If I have not thine aid O Lord! I cannot get out of the dungeon of my sins, nor avoyd the stings of that infernal scorpion, but thou without looking on the demerit of my crimes, and the transgressions of my past life, wilt I hope assist and deliver me from the perills both of soul and body, wherewith I may be surrounded.

Encl. lib. 2.

I am ready to cry out who is sufficient for these things? How can I resist the attempts of the flesh, the allurements of the world, or the assaults of our cunning adversary the devil? I am intangled as the unhappy *Laocoon* is said to be.

When three such poisonous serpents, crawling out of the earth are twisted against me: They make sure of my ruine; and how can I break the knots of such a triple League? since the beauty but of one face (adorned with several charms) had almost got the command of my heart? and the solace of idleness, the sweets of riches, the favour of vain glory many times captive my affections ere I am aware of them; what may not the cunning therefore of the Father of these falsehoods impose upon me, since he differs not in power from the best of the Angels, but in the manner of his operations, if not restrained by thine immediate hand?

When such dangerous enemies had attacked my inconsiderateness, and batter'd my cowardice, I having but little or no constancy nor integrity, I had certainly become the prey of their malice, and they must needs have left me in the very jaws of death and damnation.

Away then from me all ye instruments of sin and mischief above named, goe ye busy seducers of the best mens ways, "Ye with your jugglings dazle the eyes of the Soul, that like a Sodomite it should not find the Dore of Life, the way to get into the City of the Lamb, ye so varnish over the Copy of Falshood, as it proves a hard matter to discern her from the Original of truth; and our Consciences are hurt (not purg'd) by your sugaring over the draught of Sin.

Nevertheless, O merciful God! let that invincible power by which Lucifer was tumbled down from Heaven, and Hell it self led Captive, free me from these Hunters after my Life, these noisom Pestilences to my Health, these tyrannick *Nimrods* against my Liberty; if their malice be once turned into fury what shall I do? for if thou hadst not been my Refuge and Fortrefs I had fallen through that baseness of Mind which is incident to the Sinner, who doubts of finding any Friend in his own Heart, or any Evidence in his Conscience, but what will be against himself. If thou hadst not by thy unspeakable bounty afforded me some patience and perseverance to disentangle me from many wicked devices, perhaps the Waves of my Afflictions and Trialls would have swallowed up all the Faculties of my Soul, and made my Heart a Cage of unclean Birds, a Vessel full of nothing but what was foul and bestial.

But by thy aid I must acknowledge it is that I have given place to Charity and Forgiveness (without regarding the nice punctilioes of the blinded World) then when Egg'd on by the desire of Revenge, (which is the keenest Goad in the sides of Flesh and Blood) I strove to set up my self far above my self even in thy Throne of Vengeance. But,

For all I might have once too vainly thought to secure the best share of thy favour, when I made a Covenant with my Eyes (which are as Tinder to the Fire of Amorous passions) not to stoop at any Femal Object: and when I farther attempted to set up the Government of Reason over all the mutinies of my sense, and so to get a Triumphal-Wreath by the passing safely through those dangers

which

which threatened to overwhelm my Soul. O Lord! I find now that I Designed too much; Doing so little and Considering less; that without thy gracious and continual Assistance, without the extreamest Acts of thy bounty my utmost endeavours had been but Flourishes in the Aire, and Paens before a Victory. "They might have alarmed my Adversary, awaked his greater force and policies. But the escaping his malicious devices would have been without the compass of my Power and Arms.

"When I perceived this, I could discover also, that it was thy good will I should gain a Conquest, and though my strength was but weakness, yet that this my weakness should not be wrought upon too far by all the force and cunning of my Adversaries.

Therefore gracious Lord! I pray, that thy Goodness may have its due praise, that thy Mercy be greatly blessed, and thy Greatness glorified; since thou hast not suffered my visible or invisible Foes to triumph over me, but thou hast delivered me (like *Daniel* from the jaws of those *Abaddons*) who would have torn and miserably destroyed, even my better part, my Soul.

O that I could immortalize my Voice to resound thy Name more Gloriously! O that all my Words might become Spirits, and that I could devote them all to the service of my God, as a small acknowledgment of the grace received from thee!

However I fall short I will endeavour to speak my self not insensible though unworthy of thy Favours. I will try if my Arms (who have hitherto served as Chains to embrace the Debauches of the World) may be turned into Columns erected unto Heaven in Thanksgiving and supplications for thy help. I will try if my Mouth (which hath been the Gate of Dishonesty) may become a Theatre echoing forth thy Praise, as in thy holy Temple. I will strive to fit up my Heart into a Lamp for thine Altar, where it should be still flaming with a Zeal for thy Glory.

It hath been a Vessel foully favouring of the smutty affections of Earth, but I hope to cleanse it from such taints, now that I may liken my Soul to a Bird, which hath broken through the Snares of the Fowler.

Thanks to thy Pity gracious Lord! I now find the Devil was not so skilfull in laying his Snares, as thy Wisdom hath been in the defeat of his Stratagems. He like *Nimrod* is a mighty Hunter, ever pursuing our fearful Hearts, that he may chase them from their repose and shelter, and then surprize, take, and slay them. His Toils are the Pleasures of the World, his Darts are a Thousand Temptations, his Hounds are profane and wicked men, and what pains doth this Enemy of mankind refuse? so that he may but compass his ends, by entangling us in wretched bondage, and enslaving us under the dominion of Sin?

He hath sometimes endeavoured to enthrall me by a handsome Face, whispering it out as a Ray of thy fairest Light: and hath made use of the Glowworm Lustre in two sparkling Eyes to lead me out of thy way, into a Night of error, and when therein, now would he scare me with the severity of thy Justice, anon lull me asleep with the excess of thy Mercy; and then divert me by the evil customs of others, or charm me by my own bad Inclinations, perswading by false and carnal Reasonings.

But, dearest God how little doth the allurements of this *Circæan* World bewitch us? how heavily do the Goads of Sense drive us on? how soon are the jugglings of the grand Impostor manifest when our Souls are directed, defended, and instructed by thy Goodness? Let the greedy pursuers pitch their Nets and make ready their Arrows upon the String, all their designs and Bows shall be broken by thy commiserating care, O Lord.

If at any time the many incentives to Sin do take hold of me I trust by thy helping hand to recover my Liberty.

'Tis true my blessed Redeemer! these Eyes of mine have strangely confined their happiness within the proportions of external Beauties. Tis true my Mouth hath not echoed thy Glories, but proved the Temple of Sensualities, my Heart hath rebelled against thee, and sworn allegiance to the World, my Hands would not hold that purity thou requirest in them, nor would my Fancy be less than my God. For my own Opinion hath Exacted my Worship, and I have not been moved at all towards Offices of Charity; & in Acts of Faith have been weak and wavering.

But yet Lord 'tis as true that the Devil all this while hath gone cunningly about me, to watch and to hedg in my ways that I might not escape his artifices; so that my failings have been occasioned less by my own naughtiness than by his, and chiefly through his cunning Traps and devices, whereby my unwary Foolishness hath been inveigled.

Now that I can find my self in some such freedom as Repentance brings along with it. I can discern the Devil's malice, and Sin's Fetters broken, my Sense being led in Triumph by my Reason. I rally all my Spiritual Forces for the service of my God, and for the Worship of that goodness which hath rendered me such a mighty Object of it.

Exod. 4. 25,
26.

Mine Eyes shall summon all their Visive Powers to look up unto *Jesus*, my Mouth shall be no longer as sounding Brass or as a crackt Trumpet, giving false alarms, but like a Seraphim's touched with the fire of thine Altar to echo forth Thanks and holiness to the Lord. My Heart shall throw all its affections (now Circumcised) at the Feet of thy Grace, and my Hands shall be lift up continually to implore and to praise thy Mercies, O my God; because thou only by the Rays of thy Favour canst enlighten my Soul in such a manner as that it may drop no more into the Darkness of Sin.

Job 26. 6, 7.

All our humane Strengths are nothing worth; no more to be trusted too than the Reeds of *Egypt*; all our safety and refuges in thy Power. The welfare of my little World depends on his Arm who hath made all the other Worlds, and hanged the Universe upon Nothing, stretching forth the Globe over the empty place.

The fixth Step on the fixth PSALM of
Degrees, being the 125 PSALM.

Qui confidunt, &c.

O Ye Sons of mortal men, how long will ye turn your Bodies into weapons of Sin, your Souls into Vessels of Dishonour, your Glory into Shame, your Shame into your Boast? in believing Vanities, and seeking after false things? On what Rock but Christ can you anchor the Hopes of your Salvation and Eternity? *Psalm. 4. 5.*

Will ye trust the fading Beauties of Flesh and Blood, which are superfluous gifts of Nature, vanished in a moment, scarcely entertained or taken notice of before they take their leave and are gone?

Will ye confide on the Vigor and strength of youth? Know Death makes no distinction of ages, and after a short space of time both Youth and Health are dissolved into the imperfections of decrepid years.

But perhaps ye will trust (as ye doat) upon ~~the~~ worldly Honours? but ponder a while what Weights they are; and like Pharisaical burthens too grievous for most good men to carry. Experience shews that too many, even of the best, by the desire or Act of Ruling others grow irregular themselves, and disordering their own thoughts and quiet thereby, distemper their felicities, if not debauch their Souls: and who so trusts in uncertain Riches is worse than a Gospel Fool. "Gold is but a Wasp though it look yellow, it hath Wings
"to fly away from us, and stings to leave behind it at its departure, even such stings as are like Goads, apt to push on our
"greedy and brutish appetites to the most sordid and sinful Actions.

But ye would have a Cordial made up of all these ingredients, that rare Catholicon called Worldly felicity, which ye think might recover and secure the Spirits from all those Qualmes and Lypothymies that many times seize upon them, notwithstanding all your false jollities and merry Companions. But alas what is any happiness of this lower Globe, but like it self turning about. "'Tis but a Scene
"upon this Theatre, 'tis shifted and changed often from one to another; and appears always moving and inconstant, as long as this
"lifes Opera is acting.

Trust then in God, and in God alone, for if you be under his protection you need fear neither the Infirmities of Life nor the Injuries of Death.

Let God be your Honour, Joy, Delight, and Treasure; in him consists all Happiness and Glory. Wherefore,

Blessed God, as long as I am sheltered by thy Divine Goodness, I will not fear the Tongues of this evil World, nor the Venom of that most evil One, let them joyn all the force of their Malice and per-

fidiousness together, I will remain firm and unshaken like Mount Zion, and baffle their attempts and deride their ineffectual fury.

The good Angels are appointed by thy great care over us, to be a watchful Guard and Bulwark for our weakness, and they are called *Mountains of strength* from the excellency of their natures and thy supporting Grace. But for all that they are not strong enough (or rather not commissioned) to keep us always from the attacks of Sin, or from the Snares of the Devil.

Doubtless those Guardian Spirits direct us to Good, and very oft do turn us from Evil.

But alas the pravity of our Nature makes it not still capable of Angel-like persuasion, we are so immersed in the satisfaction of our Lufts, and so inured to sinful complacencies, that we have neither Ear nor Heart left us to listen to the Whispers of Holy Spirits. We still want O Lord! thy Admonitions, Assistance, and Conduct; 'tis to the Glory of thy Omnipotence onely, that I owe my safety. Henceforth I live with a chearful trust sprung from the greatness of thy Mercy, that thou wilt ever stand by my Soul in its frequent perils, and every action of my Life shall be smiled on with the favour of thy presence, and with the direction of thy Will.

For, as the Mountains give a defence and shelter round about the City of God, so God (who is the Rock of Ages, a vast Mountain of Power and Charity) will continually succor and secure his People.

Since 'tis the peculiar effect of thy gracious Providence, O my God! to favour and defend such who (relying on thy Pity) still implore thy help, and Sanctuary themselves under thy Providence; this is always ready to lend a helping hand to such as rightly ask it, and although sometimes the Righteous Cause is oppressed by wicked Judges, and Cruelty domineers over Goodness, and the Purple of Tyrants is double dyed in the Blood of Innocents, yet all this is done upon righteous and wise grounds.

Thereby thou hast a mind, O Lord! to try the Constancy of thy Servants, to Correct their Errors, to exercise their Patience, to brighten or refine their Graces, or else thou wouldst have them serve for excellent patterns and directions for others, that they may become thy Portion, and be fit to address themselves to thee, and then thou suffereest not their Slavery to be tedious, nor their Rod too heavy. Because they who are thus Obedient both to thy preceptive and providential Will are thy Children, whom thou Chastisest as a Father, and wilt not suffer the Scourge of the Wicked to dwell long upon thine Inheritance, especially when it earnestly begs Relief.

It would be no less contrary to that Dear Relation thou standest in to us, than to the proper goodness of thy Nature, not to restrain the fury of the impious, didst not thou hook up Leviathan in due time, it might be dangerous, that thy weak and infirm Disciples (waving thy protection) would depart from thee, and either abandon themselves to Vice (charmed by the short prosperity of evil doers) or else grow fearful of Persecution, and so put forth their hands to Iniquity, and render themselves incapable of thy Compassion.

Therefore most Gracious Lord do not forsake them who adore the
greatness

Heb. 12. 5, 6, 7.

Psal. 80. 4.

greatness of thy Love and Wisdom, and study to observe the Holyness of thy Will and Pleasure. Heap thy bounties on their Goodness, which hath no other end but God and Righteousness. O how blessed is the Man who by the integrity of his Affection, hath fouled neither Hand nor Tongue in the blemish or blood of his Neighbour! How blessed is he that by not obeying the usurpations of Sin, hath not made his Reason close Prisoner to his Concupiscence! He is also blest, who content with what he hath, would not robb nor envy the enjoyments of others. And he is blest too, that by the sincerity of his Behaviour, by the probity of his Life, by the faithfulness of his Heart, by the innocence of his Eyes, hath endeavoured to fit himself for the High-calling whereunto he is called in Jesus Christ; and thereby gain thy favour, and work out his own Salvation.

I am assured O Lord that thou powerest forth the Treasure of thy Blessings on them who make streight paths for their Feet, who keep the way of Righteousness, and are as constant as Courageous to resist all Vice; since to accommodate the Thoughts, and fix the Will to thy Dispensations, is the way to get Christ, and to be found in him, not having our own Righteousness.

But on the contrary, Those who forget thy greatness, O Lord! and fall down to the Worship of themselves; those who enter the wrong way into their Mother's Womb, and embowel the Earth to steal away her Treasure, and seem to have no other end thereby than to bury their Souls and Hopes therein; Those who being swallowed up in Voluptuousness believe no other Paradise than the delights of Flesh and Blood: or those who place next their own misfortunes, every prosperous event of others, such as choak all Virtue by imperious appetites; and Sacrifice their best faculties unto Fury and Madness; turning all Sobriety and Reason out of doors. Lastly, such as being lost to themselves, and in their own Opinions too, sometimes knowing not how to wake themselves out of the Lethargy of Vice, nor get up beyond the terms of nothing (that is, Sin and Vanity.) Such as all these are, I say, these unhappily cursed ones, shall be struck down from Heaven's glorious presence, like *Nimrod's* Gyants, with hot Thunderbolts, they shall be confounded with *Babel's* Workmen, and become the wretched Objects of the severity of such Corrections as are given by a Hand no less Powerfull and Just, than Jealous and Pure. They shall feel the Scorching of those immortal Flames, which yet can never burn out their Spots, since they have rendered themselves Heirs of Wrath, and Children of the Devil; whereas the Righteous (before-mentioned, such as may be set far from these Goats) blest with thy Love and Protection, O Lord, shall enjoy the serenity of that peace which resides in thy favour, and surpasseth our Understanding.

The seventh Step on the seventh PSALM of Degrees, being the 126 PSALM.

In Convertendo Dominus, &c.

O My God! how can I express the Consolation of my Soul? My Words are lost in my joy of Heart, and can break forth but lamely at my Lips, for I behold my self Redeemed, I find my self delivered also from the dangerous Labyrinth of my winding Errours, thanks be to thy goodness only.

The confused Chaos of my Life hath been called to by thy Word, and looked on by the Beams of thy Grace, nay, distinguished and reformed by thy Son into a new Lump, a new Conversion.

The mischiefs of my guikiness are not aggravated by the continual Remorse of Conscience, but my steps are directed by sweet methods how to keep thy Statutes to the end.

Terrene Objects have now no priviledge to control my Thoughts. My Delights and Desires retain no other relish than of a Crucified Saviour. Mine Ears took up with the name of Jesus, cannot understand or listen to the low dumb Musick of Vanity. Mine Eyes are fascinated by one glance of thine, and follow none of those Wildfires which did use to misguide them. My Taste favouring the things of God, the Glories of another State, disgusts those Treats which Satan entertained me withal (while he would have me take Stones for Bread:) All those Appetites which were most my own, and seemed Connatural to a deluded mind, (having left me nothing but Shame and Sorrow) they take their leave of me (I trust for ever) not to return any more (with seven Devils worse than themselves) to possess me.

Wherefore advanced by so much Grace, and replete with so much Happiness as to find Favour in thy sight, O most gracious Lord! how great is my Jubile! how infinite my Consolation!

Methinks the rough and narrow way to Heaven is now made plain and smooth before my Face, and my Feet are not apt to wander so as they did formerly, but are more steadily guided to the Observance of thy Commands: and I find these, as *David* saith, exceeding broad on every side of me, that I have no Temptation (without much perverseness) to depart from them. My Conscience doth not Goad me with unsound Repentance, or unsafe Despair. Mine Eyes do not stay themselves on terrene Objects, except it be to make them more contemptible, even to my outward sense. The Sin that erewhile was the Idol of my enjoyments, is now the Subject of my Hate and Abhorrence. My Actions are levelled at the love of Virtue. My Desires are converted (from the enhancing my Account, and running on further on the score of guilt) to the making all the satisfaction I can, for the Debts I have contracted, and my hope is grounded on thy Mercy (not on my poor endeavours) for the raising up the Pillar of my constant happiness.

And

And can the Mouth that is filled with such good things favour any thing else than the repetition of thy Bounty, and the excesses of thy Love? Surely my Tongue shall be now as the Pen of a ready Writer, and being urged on by the Solace of my Heart, (shall like the Angels by whom thou dost succour me) resound the Praises, and the Proofs of thy Divinity, far and near, by thy saving and conserving of my state.

O dearest Lord! thou hast condescended, more than once, to seek and to save that which was in danger to be lost, and to call not the Righteous but Sinners to thee! How doth the particular care thou takest of Sinners, even to this day, encrease and burnish the Glories of thy Name, *Jesus*!

When the very Heathens view the Smoak of Sensualities to a disappearance, and the brighter Sparks of holy Affections mounting up in lieu of the other in us. When they observe the Rebellions of our Hearts turned into Evidences of Obedience, and shall behold such a Worm as I am, the greatest of Sinners, no longer a servant of Sin but a contemner of the World and a resister of the Devil, surely they will glorify the Operations of thy Power, and the mightiness of thy love, in the Pardon and Conversion of so frail a Creature.

Even those very Animals (as the Apostle calls them) who were lost in the Labyrinths of their vicious Habits, and sought not the Clew of Repentance to help them out of Perdition. They shall be converted unto thee, through the demonstration of thy goodness to others they shall be convinced (as the *Idiotæ* were in the Primitive Church) and be constrained to magnify thy Kindness, implore thy Mercies, and advance thy Praises. 1 Cor. 2. 14, 15.
Psalm. 51.

“For to see a man who in himself is poor and naked, and stript by his Infernal Enemies of all succour, divested of all good, and left in a more wretched condition than the wounded Traveller to *Jericho*, or than the *Demoniac* among the Tombs to behold such an one clothed and in his right mind, dressed in the needful habit of Reason, and trimmed up with the ornaments of Grace, installed in the Throne of Piety, which is at the Feet of *Jesus*, and there instructed better than under a *Gamaliel*. What an Argument of Wonder may be such an example? and such an one I wish to be; that while I stir up admiration by the recount of what thou hast done for my Soul I may persuade the un-resolved that thou canst do far more for them, and that these are but small instances of thy Almightyness in respect of its infinity. “Thou canst doe, thou canst suffer, much more for the good of Mankind, if so be they will but credit thy mighty Works, and not be like *Bethsaida* and *Capernaum*. Woe be to such as believe not the marvellous testimonies of thy good will to the Sons of Men. For didst not thou, Eternal Lord! incorporate thy self with our nature, as if thou didst esteem it braver than thy own Divinity? Art thou not ready to wash out the stains of our Nature even with the Life and Blood of thy assumed one which hath so wonderfully overvalued ours? Wouldst thou not load thy most glorious person to remove our Burthens? taking off the pressures of our base Captivity by the perfect ease of thy Yoke?

Lord *Jesu*! thou hast humbled thy self to a servile state, to a con-

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versation

versation upon earth, to reconcile contradictions, the Son of God, and the Sons of *Belial*, and so to unite the most sinful to the most Holy, though not as they are impure, as themselves; but as cleansed by thy Grace, and Redeemed to be thine. By these effectual merits of thy working upon Earth by Water and Blood, by thy Tears and Prayers, by thine Agony and Bloody Sweat, by thy Cross and Passion, and by the coming of the Holy Ghost (though he be grieved also) in the handing of the benefits thou hast purchased for such Enemies as we have been, both to them, to thy Spirit, to thy Love, and to thee. The sense of these overflowing Bounties like strong perfumes to a weak body, might easily dissipate my Spirits and untie my being, I might be soon unloosed from Life and all the World, as I desire to be, by the full apprehensions of their Vigor. In the mean time good God accept my Heart, all Jubile, and Thanksgiving, for that thou hast dealt so strangely with thy Servant as to give me enough, nay all, yea, more than this All, far more than my Capacities or the Universe may contain. I have all and abound, and what more can a Sinner expect or Receive? What more can a God do for such a Sinner? Yes, he can still enlarge my measures for Reception, as well as fill them more and more unto Eternity. Bless the Lord then always, O my Soul! and least at any time thy Joys should flag or lessen; be daily taking preservatives against Sin, and get farther from the Plague of this mortal condition, from the Offending of so Good a Lord; O could I fly out of the reach of such infection, I might then judge my satisfaction no less secured than unspeakable! whereas the frequent receipts of thy Kindness paid here with cold affections or ungrateful acts, cast too oft a damp over the Wings of my joy, and is a sad abatement of that Towering comfort which I might pitch upon in the Expressions of thy Love and mine.

Free me therefore I beseech thee, dearest Lord! from the Bondage of my Corruptions, Suffer not the wounds of Original Sin to rankle or gangrene in my Heart, lest these become so outrageous as to refuse or fear the help of thy Hand for its healing and binding up.

“Such a Wolf did once eat off the Breasts of the beloved Spouse, the Church of *Israel*, and turned her to a dry and barren Wilderness. But, Lord, prevent the spoil that such ravenous furies would make in thy Vineyard, and heal our Souls though we have Sinned against thee.

Let not the filthiness of my actual Offences poison the health or Salvation of my State: let not worldly greatness or sensual pleasures enslave my Thoughts from thy worship, to other services (which indeed are meer slaveries and the basest of such.) But as the Southwinds (or *Sirocco's*) do usually impregnate and swell up Torrents, so let the Gifts and Graces of thy Holy Spirit augment all probity and Virtue in my Soul, tending to the Ocean of Eternal Perfections. And farther empower my Heart to be truly penitent that the Springs from thence running through my Eyes, may help to wash off the spots which have besmeared my Conscience.

I Know, Great God! that whosoever doth exercise himself in the Olympicks of true Devotion, he that outbraves the fashions or flatteries of the World, he that adores thy Greatness with humility and fixes his hopes on Celestial Objects: He it is that sows to the Spirit

rit such a Seed that will instantly bear Thirty fold in the return of more Grace, and hereafter an hundred in the Harvest of Glory. And he that sheds the Tears of Religious mourning upon Earth shall reap Comfort and Joy in Immortality, when all Tears shall be wiped off, and Sorrows and Sighings shall melt away.

Give me then leave to attend thee with all sorts of the Grain of Tears. I would weep for the pardon of my Guilt, to save my self from the Foulness of it, I would weep for displeasing thee, as for the deserving thy Vengeance, and this to quench the fervours of my Lusts. I would weep over the Miseries of our present Mortality, to solace my down-cast Spirit in her clayie Prison and Relegation. I would weep for my "Tamuz, for my Adonis, for my Adonai, for my self and for others, Ezech. 8. 14.
"for my vile Idolatries and Prostitutions, for my Spiritual Fornications, for my own and others manifold defilements, according as
"thou, dear Lord! didst advise thy people when thou didst command
"them saying, *Weep not for me, but weep for your selves*, and I will weep
"for thee also, O my Adonai, my Love, my Dove, my Undeified one, for
"having treated thee so savagely and occasioned others to affront thee
"too, and ^{weep thus} to procure ease and satisfaction to thy self, to others,
"and to me. Even to the screwing up of the Joys and Harmony of the Celestial Mansions. And Lastly, I will weep to encrease my Thirst of that Country which thou hast promised us above, that I may fill up such a Nilus here, as may render the Egypt of my Condition more fruitful under all thy Providences.

Now that I find my self embarrassed in great streights, in a World Malevolent to real Bliss, where the Prince of it is still trying the strength of my Constancy, and Sense is offering violence to my Reason, where Company by ill examples and incitements increase my frailties, where Beauty, Ambition, Honours and Anger, Covetousness and Sloth, would play the Dalilahs to abuse and snare me; give me leave, O God! while I am a Travelor in the Vale of Misery to dig up Fountains of Penitential Waters, to cleanse off the Scales from my Eyes which have been so often blinded by the treacheries of my Enemies, and thine.

O that I could now cultivate the ground of my Heart by Fasting, Prayers and Tears, by deeds of Charity and Offices of Devotion! and then with the *Four and twenty Elders* in the Revelations, demise at thy Feet such Crowns and Palmes, such Talents and Abilities as thou hast put into my Hands to account for in thy Kingdom; for thine is the Dominion, Power and Glory, and thou art onely worthy to receive the Profits of thine own. No Soul can tast more joy than his that can approach unto thy dreadful Throne with a Conscience so void of Offence (as not to accuse it self) and with a small treasure of good Works (such a Present as the Patriark sent the Egyptian Governour, *Gen. 43. 11.*) which may bring whole sheaves again to us.

Finally, Grant that all my Faculties may count themselves bound to honour thy name for ever; that my Heart may be all on fire for thy Love, and my Affections own no other Object nor employ but thy Service, nor my Senses relish other Beauties, Hopes, or Acquests than those of Heaven and Eternity.

Let me have with thee all the Conditions and Qualifications of a true Votary in Serving, Imitating and Suffering, serving thy Com-

mands with all my Powers, Copying thy Actions with all diligence, and enduring all oppositions with an humble fortitude, that I may reap the fruit of Holiness, and its end Everlasting Life. *Amen.*

The eighth Step on the eighth P S A L M of Degrees, being the 127 P S A L M.

Nisi Dominus edificaverit.

MY Soul is so beleaguered with dangers, that like a long besieged City, 'twill fall at last into the Enemies Hands, unless it be relieved by thine extream Compassion, what pitiful succour hath all things besides thee brought? alas I can hardly owne that I have been helped even by the best preaching of thy Ministers, nay, what good doth *Moses* and the Prophets to my wretched State? All thy most holy Doctrine, O thou Holy of Holies! all those most excellent patterns and precepts of Saints and Martyrs afforded to me, reach not far enough to jogg my Senses out of the Lethargy of Sin, unless thou stretch forth thy Arm, O God! (even Christ out of thy own Bosom) and put him into mine, that that Sun of Righteousness may enlighten and enliven my dark Breast. This hath devoted all its affections to thy service, 'tis true, but indeed it cannot keep them to their duty without thy constant overlooking of them. Although in thy holy Sacraments thou breathest down thy Spirit for us to receive, what care do we take (for all thine) to Welcom, House, or entertain it by the small remainders of Faith, Hope, or Charity.

And as all their Efforts are vain and fruitless, who toile to build up their worldly satisfactions without thy blessings, so is all the industry of the Mind to no purpose for the acquiring or preserving of Grace, without thy good will or Divine assistance, since from thee we have our principles and beginnings, our conservation, protection, and perfection.

“Without thee (as thou hast told us) we can do nothing but we must likewise know that thou art not far from any one of us, nor forsakest such as seek thee truly.

Many do mis-conjecture that the height of Walls, the depth of Waters, the thickness of Works, the courage of Men, the goodness of Arms, the fulness of Provisions, the watchfulness of Guards, and the wisdom of Commanders will secure any Regular Fortification; when alas all the Ramparts will founder, all the Bastions and Lines fall in together, (like the walls of *Jericho*) the Curtains will drop down, or rend in pieces, (being too thin and sleight to keep out an Enemy) while wrapped in them the sleepy Centinels shall be carried off to Eternal Slumbers, unless thy Providence and Protection,

O Lord of Hosts be over such a Fortrefs, for it is thy favour that must be its strong Tower and Rock of defence, and Magazine of safety; without that all we can do signifies nothing. How far can humane industry advance to raise a man up (like *jeremiah* out of the Dungeon) from the pit of Sin, or despair? or to support him in thy presence? till thou sayest the Comfortable Edict, *I will be thou clean?* 'Tis true the Angels are ministring Spirits, and Holy men help instrumentally to the conservation of Grace, and to the disposing of our Minds to good by their exhortations and examples. And,

'Tis certain that I am not seldom affected with the consciousness of my provocations, so that I resolve then vigorously to spend the residue of my dayes amongst the Rigors of an Austere Repentance: while my Remembrance shames me with the Thoughts of thy abused patience (which must needs be turned into fury, and this be imbittered by delay.) Yet for all this without thy special Grace and particular assistance all my Resolutions are but Spiders Webbs, my strongest attempts but as Stubble before a consuming fire, very weak and ridiculous motions. It is not in Man (saith the Prophet) to direct his Steps.

Therefore trust not, O mortal men! either to your selves or to your possessions; trust not your enjoyments of great Knowledge, or of great Strength, no not of the chief Natural or Corporeal Faculties, no more than you would credit the turning Wheel of *Fortune*, or the Top of worldly Pomp and Honours.

Can ye think by robbing your Eyes of Sleep, your Minds of Rest, your Limbs of Ease, or your Bodies of Health, ye may do any thing on your own score, to gain the applause of Heaven, or to throw open the Gates of Paradise? No, no, the Roots of your Merit should be set on another Ground, it is not a Plant that will grow in the barren soil of our Earth, we must have God's daily Cultivation, his Love, his Shelter, and his Sun too, or else we shall go without it.

And to obtain some worthiness of thy Regard, some favour in thy sight, a sound and sincere reliance upon Christ doth avail more than all the Watchings, Fastings, Austerities and Rods, which some make such a bustle withall, and too often to little purpose, for their rising at Midnight, or before Day, is but a walking in darkness; their arrogant reliance on their own Performances, is but increasing the difficulties of such achievements as depend not on our own Strength or Merit; but on God's Free-will, and his alone good pleasure.

Assist me therefore, O most gracious Lord! with such a Grace as may gratifie my humble requests, and graciously receive the submission of my Heart in all its acts of Penance with sincerity of Address, of Trust, and Obedience to thee, and to thee onely, (for to which of the Saints may I turn?)

That although I have been long embraced within the Arms of Sin, I may now break away from that Harlot, and from the bondage of my Guilt, and fly unto thee for a place of rest in the Bosom of thy Favour and Compassion.

Lord suffer not the naughtiness of my Heart to inveigle me to any further expectation of Comfort, or hope of Satisfaction, than in those things that are above, and there promis'd me by thy Truth and Goodness

ness. Let not Worldly concerns, or poor transitory Prizes allure my Soul; which stoops too oft at low Objects; she should tower more out of sight of Earth, like a Bird of Paradise, and direct her mount to that Summit, or height where should be her Airie, and which was her Country, Ah! did she ply her Wings thitherward (like thy holiest Dove) she would not be endangered by the Floods of Humane unhappiness, she would reach home with her *Olive* and *Myrtle* branches, with Peace, and Purity.

While Employing all the Labours of my Life and longings of my Heart after a sight of God in such Righteousness, (as Peace and Holiness bring along with them) I my self might be secured both in Life and in Death; and I should find Death but as a sleep and Heaven as an Inheritance, long promised to the Faithful, and laid up for us in those promises; as laid out in that other Life, where those who are faithful unto Death may expect a full satisfaction of their Pains, Hopes and desires, and meet with a farther Solace in a Knowledge of one another, and of all their Fellow-brethren, even the whole flock of Christ; which shall then appear in his Presence, and enter into his Joy, and triumph in his Courts to all the Ages of an happy Eternity.

I will therefore, O my God! assert my self thy Creature, the work of thy Almighty Power, the Fruit of the Body of Christ, begotten again to a lively hope by his blood, and seeking Regeneration by his Ordinances, and by my Faith; so that I may not love the World nor the things of it, but do the will of our Father which is in Heaven.

But doth it not require much Sweat, vast Pains and violent Exercises, and very great Self-denial, to enter in at the strait Gate, and to walk worthy of the Denomination of a Son of God? Yea surely. 'Tis therefore needful to leave off the pursuit of all those vain complacencies which have served onely to amuse and to deceive me here below.

'Tis needfull, O my Soul! that thou being armed by devout Prayer and Fasting, shouldest be sober and watchful to repell the most furious attacks of his Temptations, who is come forth against thee like a ravenous Lion. 'Tis needful for thee to make Reason thy Pilot, Religion thy Load-star for thy better passage through the waves of this troublesome Life, and if thou steerest wisely in the faithless Sea of this World, weathering all the stormes of Impetuous affections, thou mayest at last arrive at the Haven where thou wouldest be: and as the feigned Son of *Jupiter* is said to overcome the many-headed Monster, so thou mayest by thy several Labours in Charity, Love, Faith, Repentance, and Restitution, subdue the *Hydra* of Sin, and approve thy self a Child of God according to the Apostles assertion.

Now thou mayest understand that the Sons of God are like Arrows in the Hands of a Gyant, they wound the Hearts of Gods Enemies, and scatter such as delight in Mischiefe, destroying and beating down what is evil, quickening Faith and working Love in the Godly; and the Effects of such Divine Instruments as these, are the discouragement of Sin, the feeding the Hungry, Cloathing the Naked, succouring the Poor, entertaining the Stranger, visiting the Prisoner, freeing the Captive, burying the Slain, correcting the Obstinate, counselling the Ignorant, comforting the Afflicted, assisting the Weak,

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forgiving the Injurious, and praying for the Persecutors. In fine, all the most accomplished performances of the Memory, Will and Intellect, are but as so many barbed Arrows put into our Hands by God to be shot against his Enemy Satan, and (the maker of the Devil,) Sin.

How happy then is the Christian Warrior, who makes use of these Weapons! How happy is the *Jonathan* that can strip himself of his Harnes of Worldly mindedness, of the full Quiver of his Lusts, of the Girdle of Self-love (wherewith he is too often girded) for the sake of the Son of *David*! He is Lovely as much as Lowly, who can hate himself and all things here below. He is Just and strong indeed, who can do Violence to his own Interest for the greater benefit thereby to his Neighbour. He is wise, that can chuse a Saviour's Thorns rather than the sweetest Flowers of Sin, which are but for a season. He is Noble, that makes use of Greatness chiefly for the Glory of God. He is Rich, that will lavish his *Mammon* here to make himself Friends therewith hereafter. And he in truth, is the alone happy man who with ardent affection and continued watchfulness hears, receives and obeys the truth of thy Work, and allows no Resting place, no Ark, nor any *Asylum*, to unlawful desires or inordinate affections within him.

Such men as these before-mentioned, they are who in the midst of the Fire, the Thunder and Lightnings, Cries and Terrors of the last Judgment, shall never be daunted in the presence of their Judge, nor by the Indictment of their Accusers.

For being kept in perfect Peace by the stay of their Souls on thee, good Lord! they are safely brought into the Harbour of a quiet Conscience, and under the shelter of a mighty *Jesus*, who is able to save them to the uttermost from all their Adversaries, and from all such accusations as may not then touch the justified by Christ, although they may serve to convince other Sinners, and display the Ungodliness of Sin.

The ninth Step on the ninth PSALM of Degrees, being the 128 PSALM.

Beati, qui timent.

HE that would gain the Beatitude of thy Favour, O Lord! must of necessity fear thy greatness and obey thy precepts, so that he is the blessed man upon Earth that knows exactly how to guide his Feet into the ways of Peace, into the paths of thy Commandments, and doth meet with no other inconveniences in his way, than the doubts he may sometimes encounter about thy Love and Favour to him. The fear of thy Power,

Dan. 4. 31, 32.
Jer. 51. 9.

and the Reverence of thy greatness, is so needful, even for the very best, else why hath thy justest Vengeance armed it self with Thunder to strike down the presumptuous? Why hast thou by Fire from Heaven extinguished the memorial of Transgressors?

Why didst thou command the Waters to climb above the highest Mountains, but that thou mightest overcome the greatest Sinners? and shew how by thy wrath (as by thy Love) thou couldest hide a multitude of faults. Thou hast bred Monsters within men by conscious apprehensions, and often surroudest those *Scilla's* with terrors of guilt. Thou hast many times suffered thine Enemies to punish one another by their Cruelties. And not seldom by Earthquakes, by panick Confusions or Fears, by Portentous Signes, and strange *Voices, thou wouldest instruct all them who listen to thee, speaking either on Earth or from Heaven, and thou wouldest also correct the infidelity of others, and thereby convince such how thou art to be feared.

* Such as were
μεταβαλλων
ἐν τοῖς, fre-
quently heard
before the De-
struction of Je-
rusalem.

Yet surely the fear that is struck into us by the Effects of thy Power is not so kindly welcom to thee, nor so agreeable to us, as that which proceeds from a sense of thy Love and pity: and I know by experience that thou wouldest be loved chiefly, because thou art Long-suffering, rather than Omnipotent; and thou hast proved thy self most a God by shewing mercy, in being not called now the Lord of Hosts, but the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, in whom dwels the fulness of the Godhead bodily, and in him thou art our Father which art in Heaven, Hallowed be thy Name, &c. How wonderfully this advances the proof of thy Clemency above that of thy Power! to the end that mans Fear and Reverence of thee may Spring rather from his filial affection, than from thy Supreme Authority.

And doubtless he that fears thee, O my God! out of a regard to thy Statutes, that he may not infringe them, nor hazard the Loss of thy Favour, nor lose the Hopes of his Adoption, or of his Admission into the Joy of his Lord, he surely reaps the best of Heaven and Earth, the truest Comforts of this life and of a better. Therefore I with all Mankind would take such a Course as this! How healthful then would be your Sweats, how blessed your Pains, how profitable your Labours, O ye Mortals! who too often spend your Strength in vain, and your time in fruitless works of darkness. Then your Wealth would not be impaired and blasted as 'tis now frequently by the Rapine of others, by the Rigour of ill seasons, or by a Thousand Cross events, but it would be an enjoyment as sweet as 'tis a Possession, and serve for your just Satisfaction and Necessities, as well as for the profit of many more. The care you would then take to be Charitable, and the sincerity ye would use in the Application of your Mammon to good purposes, would make it return double to you (like Job's Estate) and be preserved to you by God himself: who seeing you not besmeared with Envy or Covetousness, in respect of these deceitful Goods, or misled by Pride, or Worldly-mindedness, he would delight in your Abundance together with your selves, and (while ye tasted the sweets of all your Industry) he, the good Husband-man (so called John c. 15. v. 4.) would also tast a grateful, because a gracious Return and Relish of that full Cup of yours, which he had first put into your hand, as likewise of that penalty (which we may thus happily undergoe) how in the Sweat of our brows

Κεῖμα
κεῖμα.

we may eat here comfortably, and get up to God's holy Hill at last.

For let us be convinced, 'tis by taking pains, and in the fear of the Lord, that all the Felicities of every estate must be acquired.

Universal Nature hath no Bliss, nor Pleasure for such as do not fear and tremble, pant, and struggle after it, in Gods way. Such as do, lack nothing (saith the Scripture). The Stars and Elements jointly concur, not to fight against them (as against *Sisera*) but to pour upon them benign influences, nay the Incarnate Wisdom of the Deity, which is the Bridegroom of every pious, and lowly Soul, continually waters the Garden of his Spouse, and (like the Spirit in the Blood) runs through the abstrusest Channells of the Breast, and sometimes produces the Peace of God (*which passeth all understanding*), sometimes it nurtures Chastity (which is as admirable as rare,) now it presents it modesty, by which the most exorbitant ambitions may be checked, and then points it out to the means of acquiring true Honour. Sometimes it exhorts to the Possession of that Heritage *St. Peter* speaks of, which is all one with a happy Eternity: and directs the wandring Thoughts (which were nigh lost upon worldly Objects) to the contemplation of the Greatness, and of the Goodness of that Portion prepared in Heaven. 1 Pet. 1. 4.

At other times it augments the proofs of a right Charity, which gilds the way to Happiness.

And thus at last true Wisdom proves a Vine, which being planted in our mortal earth, proves like *Joseph* very fruitful, and brings forth Clusters unto Holiness, stretching out its Roots towards the Well of Life, and its Armes to kiss the top of Glory, and rests its whole force and State upon the sufficient strengths of a Saviour.

Hence comes it to pass, that all the Operations of such an one as fears God, spring constantly from his Union with the Eternal Wisdom, and are very compleat acts of Probity and Vertue.

His thoughts mount even to the third Heaven, not stooping in their flight towards mortal things, for any other reason, than to make it afterward force up the higher; his Heart becoms so emptied of Vanity, that no Impressions find long harbour there, but such as Linen our Divine Love. His eyes enamoured with the Beauties of Heaven, meet no objects here below, but such as seem unworthy its regards. His Tongue that perhaps had been an Eccho to the Licentiousness of the Age, now utters nothing but what is full of moral conclusions for himself, full of good Counsels for others, and more full of acknowledgements of God's kindness to all.

Those his desires which were once inveigled by the prettiness of a Face, by the possession of Wealth, or by the vanity of Honour, now are settled on the Glories of Heaven, on the *Indies* of another World, on the Beauties of Holiness, on the Charmes of the Grace of God, that hath appeared unto all men.

And thus the men which are rightly said to fear the Lord, (*Malch. chap. 4.*) and reverence him indeed with sacred Worship, they are renewed in the Spirit of their minds, and are still fresh and flourishing like Olive-branches in the House of their God.

"They are (*Festoons*) the Garlands which crown his Temples, and "imbellish his Triumphs for ever more. About their rich adornments

"and noble stations, we may find enwreathed such instructions, (as the Psalmist presents us here) *Lo! thus shall be done to the Man whom the King will Honour*; Lo! thus shall he be blessed that feareth the Lord.

Whosoever therefore will learn to joyn Obedience to a Devout fear, by holding down his own restif Will to the Law of God, and (being jealous of his natural Infirmities) prove still solicitous to be safe by taking care not to offend in Thought, Word, or Deed, such a man may be assured of Divine Grace, and the Consequence of this both in time, and beyond it also.

Lord, I perceive thou requirest nothing of me but a willing mind; but that Fear, and that Obedience, that should be as easily, as duely given thee; and how come we to Sin, but by disobedience? what is the chief occasion of our offending thee, but the not dreading thine Anger? If I would learn rightly how to fear, I might shun the Hazards both of Life and Death. Negligence for the most part makes us Contumacious, whereas on the contrary Fear drives away neglect, deters us from Vice, learns us Discretion, fences the Soul against temptation, and plies it to all probity, of which in some sort it may be termed the chief Cause. Therefore,

Grant me thy Grace, O merciful God! to be qualified by the acts of Love, and Charity, to fear thy Power and Majesty, without ceasing (as Joseph did,) under the greatest temptations. Grant that being enamoured with the sanctity of thy Precepts, I may not be perverted by the enveiglements of Sinns, nor by the vanities of this Age. Grant that loosing my Heart from all Worldly dissoluteness, it may abide a Vessel of Honour, and Purity, of Holyness, and Election: By these means, O my God! I shall hope thy blessing, and, dearest Lord! thou canst not deny the effects of thy Grace, towards those who serve thee humbly, and love thee sincerely, and trust intirely upon thee.

Wherefore, my Soul being parched up with the fervour of my Love for thee, waits like a thirsty Land, for the Dew of thy blessing to refresh it, so as to make it recover the verdure of its Hopes, and shoot up like the poor Mustard seed until its Armes may reach up to Heaven, and take hold of that Glorious Eternity, which makes thy Church there Triumphant.

Extend thy accustomed goodness (for thine Arm, O Lord! is not shortened that it cannot save) and answer, I beseech thee, my Prayers, with such Blessings, as are still sought for by the good, and feared by the evil, hoped for by the Faithful, and despaired of by the Cast-away. For they are Sanctified Mercies, and the chief blessing of Sanctification, which secure a future Inheritance, as likewise many temporal Felicities, of those kinds as are ordinarily thrown unto the Worst, and but seldom allowed unto Gods own Children, without a superabundant measure of Holiness, and devout Care, but these being bound up with the richest Jewels of the Crown, inaugurate us with the Earnest of thy Spirit, and ensure us that after the troublesome exile of this mortal Life, we shall be made Heirs of that Glorious Kingdom, which is inconceivably Happy, and Desirable, and for which we implore thy Favour, through Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

The

The tenth Step on the tenth PSALM of
Degrees, being the 129 PSALM.

Sape expugnaverunt.

Fear not Temptations, O my Soul ! the Apostle saith, We should count it all joy when we enter into them, for these are but, to exercise thy Patience, to prove thy Sincerity, and to justify thy Fidelity. How canst thou hope to arrive at Gods Favour, like one of his dear Children, unless thou endure the Fiery tryal?

Resist therefore, O my Soul ! if it should be even to Blood, because at last, even by the Temptation, God can make a way for thy escape, and thy God shall be with thee, thy tribulation shall but compleat the worthiness of thy condition.

How oft in the more florid times of Youth, when that cooler reason, like a Winter fled from the Spring of Sense, (and by the growing heat of this, the other was driven away;) then, how did the great Enemies of my Welfare play their Game most cunningly, to estrange my Heart from due Obedience to its Maker? How oft did those deadly Foes of mine make use of the Charms of such Beauty, as had but borrowed all its fine Feathers from Art, and adorn'd its Trophies with the spoils of many Graves? and all this to fetter me like a Bondslave, to fix me to this lower World, so that I might not be able to run the way of the Commands of God, nor to find the Path of Life, and Tranquillity. Thus my Companions, whether good or bad, can witness against me, for to both indeed, (though in different manners) I have imparted the Conspiracy of my rebellious Affections.

There are some debauched persons, who have too often accompanied me, and there are some devout persons who have admonished me, when I have been in the midst of my Extravagancies, and I must confess, (that for all the Aid I have craved, and the Advice I have desired, of the best men for the mastering of my Sensualities,) the very Principles, and first motions of my Repentings have been laid at terribly, and much attacked by the Suggestions, and Temptations of my invisible Foes, and by the ill examples, and false colours of my apparent Friends, who indeed have been the mortallest Adversaries to my welfare, by representing Lust to me, as an unavoidable warmth of Nature; Anger, as the Effect of my Vigorous Soul; Avarice, as the Daughter of Prudence; Idleness, as the Balsome of Health; Gluttony, as the needful Magazine for the Body; Envy, as the wise and usual Virtue of Emulation; Pride, as a convenient quality for High-born persons, and to be assumed, together with the titles of our Ancestors.

In fine, by their Tyrannizing over my Will, they have not left tempting of me, till through their Authorities, and worse Examples,

together with my own Corruptions, I have been drawn into the fowlest Crimes, and most dangerous Offences.

But now being armed by the Power of thy Glorious Name, O holy *Jesus!* and by the Divinity of thine Instructions, I hope to overcome all the Malice, and all the Violence of my Adversaries, who shall be so lost in their own Confusion, and Disappointments, as that they shall onely serve to advance the proof of my Constancy, and to accelerate the destruction of their own Malice.

For alas! how often have these cruel hunters laid snares to entrap my Soul by Sin? They have allured me by the feigned sweetness of Worldly Pleasures; they have perswaded me to offend out of a rash confidence of Pardon; they have diverted me with such Sensualities, as might soonest abuse my Constitution; they have entrapped me with such false arguments, as might soonest deceive the simple, and betray the innocent.

Lord! How often have they derided thy Power, with impious, and prophane Discourses, becoming the Oracles of Hell, they have vented Blasphemies against thy Holiest Name? And, Ah! too often, with Raillery, and Scorn, have they attacked my Obedience, and overthrown my observance of thy Precepts. Every-ways they did so batter my Faith, that I seemed to bear in my Bosom the rebukes of many, and to have the weight of their Sin upon my Shoulders; this was a Load so insupportable to my weakness, as hereupon my Afflictions became the more grievous, by their continuance upon me in such a woful manner.

But Lord! that Sovereign Justice of thine, which deals Rewards, and Punishments; (and is constantly impartial in thy Corrections, as in thy Remunerations,) 'tis that which at last hath discovered the Cheats, defeated the force, and repulsed the pride of those impious Sinners, who insnared my Safety, contrived my Ruine, and digged Pitts (as the Prophet saith) for my Soul.

Thou, most Glorious God! hast done Gloriously, thou hast trod down the Pride of those spurners at thy Greatness, thou hast yoked their stiff Necks, for all their wild boasting, that they go down with the most pompous Train, and with the best Company. How will they dwell in darkness? lost in the Confusion of Eternal Shame, and in the total Eclipse of thy Favour; who with Infernal Malice did persecute him that worshiped thee, and despised him that served thee, and hated him that loved thee? Shall such at all enjoy the sweet fruits of thy bounty? Or be remembered when thou makest up thy Jewels, any otherwise than to be condemned, and blotted out of the Book of Life? No surely, they shall sink under the weight of their Crimes, and be buried, as well as die, in those Sins wherein they chose to live.

In the mean time, what Praise and thanks do I not owe to my Gracious Redeemer's goodness? since thou, Lord! hast been so ready to free my Shoulders from the burthen which might have broke my Back, and my Heart from those Snares that would have endangered my Life or Liberty. With what excess of Pity hast thou corrected the mistakes, and prevented those slips of my Carriage, that might have drove me down a Precipice of Despair?

Thou, dearest Lord! hast washed out the spots of my Uncleanness, which

which would have made me odious to God, and Man. Thou hast healed those Wounds which were grown old and rankled by my Carnal compliances, and would have rendered my safety very doubtful, so that the Enemies of my Salvation, and of thy Glories, O God! shall no farther triumph over my weakness, nor Captivate my will that is so bound to thy Goodness.

But those our Enemies who would not have thee to rule over my Soul, may become like the Herbs growing on the House top, that wither and come to nothing ere they can attain to any perfection of growth or Beauty. So let their vain Images be despised and neglected, as that nothing of them may be saved or gathered up by the meanest care of Men or Angels, at that great day of Harvest, when every ones Works shall be made manifest of what sort they are.

Deal thus, Great God! with those impious wretches, who are guilty of High-Treason against thy Majesty, and of Felony against my Soul; let them fall the Victims of thy just Displeasure, and help by their punishment to mitigate the Sorrows of such poor wretches, as they drew into the Nets of their Sins, and so into joint sufferance with themselves: and let them glorify thy Name, even in the Fire, through that probation of thine unalterable Justice.

In the World let them meet with no success, until they Repent; let them hast away like Shadows of the Night, because they have loved Darkness, and ventured to hide themselves from the sight of God.

Nor may they be Blessed by any one that passeth through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, so that they may be shut out of all hopes of Happiness, for indeed obstinate Sinners are like the Ground which the Lord hath Cursed; unworthy to have one Shower of good Wishes, or Consolations bestowed upon them from good men; and much more incapable of the Dew of God's Blessing. But, Ah! let not my Portion be with such, nor shut up my Life with the Bloody-minded, but empower me to resist the Malice of the Evil-ones, and so to rely upon thy Favour, as to live under thy Protection and Cognisance, and to be known for ever by the white Stone with a new name, even by the blessing of thy holiest Name, O Lord Jesus! Amen.

The eleventh Step on the eleventh PSALM of
Degrees, being the 130 PSALM.

De profundis, &c.

O Lord how wretched, woful, lamentable is the Condition of a Sinner! who being turned into his own Enemy doth nothing but lay Ambushes for himself; while he forgets ungratefully thy benefits, he becomes most worthless, and hated both of Heaven and Earth! He deserves no Mansion but in Hell. Alas, unhappy Sinner! how art thou forsaken by thy Creator, Redeemer, and Comforter, even by all of thy God! and thy hopeless state is the more dreadful, being accompanied with the fearful expectation of Judgement. Thy Crimes bring with them unspeakable bitterness, because they fore-bode Eternal Torments, and thy Life is but a continual Death, by reason of the gnawings of Conscience, the Horror of thy guilt, and the domineering of thine Enemies over thee.

Yet for all this with the lowest Humility that is due to the height of thy State, and to the meanness of mine own; while the requests of my Heart keep time with the Words of my Mouth, I am bold to cry aloud for Mercy, and beg thy Compassion, O Lord God! although thy Mercy and Compassion may seem to stoop too low, while they take up my Petitions unto thine Ears. And if these are better employed in hearkening to the Echoes of thy Glories, to the Lauds of thy Saints, and to the Harmony of Heaven, yet let them not disdain the importunity of those longings after thee, which arise from a firm desire, and a deliberate Resolution, and address themselves to the Footstool of thy Goodness.

O Lord, I know the King of *Israel* is a merciful King. I know thou takest pleasure in hearing the Requests of thy poor Creatures, especially if they proceed from humble Hearts, and contrite Spirits. I know that thou art ready to put a stop to the Musick of Heaven, and to give a pause to thine own Praises, rather than the Prayers of such a poor Supplicant's should not be listened to.

Therefore Receive with grateful attention those cries of mine, which bring with them the true evidences (as I trust) of Conversion, as well as of Contrition. It is the great prerogative of thy Uncircumscribed Majesty, as to hear and determine of my guilty State; So by thy Mercy to receive my Petitions, and reprieve me from the Sentence passed on me by reason of my Crimes.

Therefore I beg thou wouldst not regard the number of my Sins, nor the Quality and Aggravations of them, which I will not pretend to enumerate by some few instances, because thou knowest the minutest grain of my Offences. Thou hast a particular of them all. And, Shouldst thou weigh our Guilt in the Ballance of thy Justice only, shouldst

shouldst thou be extremely severe in thy punishment of what is athis about us, if thou shouldst not in thy Displeasure think upon thy pity, and give this leave to Plead while the other arraigns; O Lord, who might abide thy presence, or stand before thee in Judgment? The brightest Angels are not pure in respect of thee, and the most Holy would scarce be safe! Where then should the Wicked and Sinner appear, but in the bottomless Pit of Destruction? Had thy Wisdom thought good to have set thee only upon the Correction of our failings, the World it self, as well as we, had been long since buried in the Cinders of our last Funerals; and wholly burnt up with the Fire of thy just Displeasure.

“But since thou hast set thy Pity and Good-will, thy Son and thy Spirit, as better Advocates between thy own Purities and thy Creatures Frailties, than Mans weakned Nature or worse Infirmities could be: for we all are too apt to set these on pleading for us, as being ever near us, yet, Ah! let us beseech thee rather to listen to the others in our behalf, hearken to that chiefest Councillor of thy self and us, the most holy, and gracious *Paraclete*; and hear thy Son Interceding for us Wretches, more freely than we hear him instructing of us.

Continue the incomparable Acts of thy Mercy, and exercise the accustomed proofs of thy goodness towards us, with the merits of Christ's precious Blood wash out my spots, with the floods of my Tears quench the fire of my Lusts, that I may not be found the Heir of Wrath, or Child of the Devil.

For indeed the true Repentance of a Sinner is the sole effect of thy Bounty. Man that is now made up of nothing but the mud of Earthly Debauches, cannot so little as look up to Heaven (with the Publican, though he look no higher than the Clod he stands on) without thy special influencing aid. But this Ray thou hast promised by Ten thousand solemn attestations, and 'tis the Light of Mankind which thou hast afforded, that it might light every one coming into the World. Saints and Prophets have born witness that thou art the God of Sinners, if Penitent; thou art the Redeemer of the most vile and miserable when they truly return to their Father's embraces.

Let it then be an Addition to thy Glories, that thou hast more of Pity, than I have of Provocation, and that thou yet retainest better Dispositions to pardon Sins, than I have Inclinations to commit them. Through the excess of thy Goodness, thou hast bounded thy own self, and given less to thy Power and Justice than it might have challenged, and therefore have I long waited for thy Salvation, O Lord.

I have endured the Stings of delay while I looked for thy Redemption, and sighed for the effects thereof; and I must averr my Labour hath not been in vain, for I have found the Hopes thou gavest me, to be answered; thy Word concerning me to be true and good; and thy promises to be performed.

They may be left to their own deceivings; who wait upon the vanity of the world, and build their expectations on mortal assurances. My Heart being fixed on the verity of thy Covenant, on the certainty of thy Promises, on the Anchor of a lively Hope, secures it self of meeting with such favour as is inseparable from thy Majesty.

For

For my own part, I am guilty of a Thousand Crimes, nor is there any thing in me but Filth, and Frailty.

I have triumphed in my Vices, as if I had liberty to commit them, and not to overcome them; even while I denied my betters the liberty of reprehending them.

Instead of abasing my self to the Dust, (that Principle of my Being) I have dared to contend with Omnipotence. Death and Hell have been imagined Dreams and Phantasms, only to scare the simple; and not to be Instruments of thine anger, to scourge the guilty.

But yet my Soul doth humbly now suppose it self an Object, not less proper for thy incomprehensible Mercy, because of its infinite Unworthiness, and will rely only upon that Mercy of thine, since it is worse than Folly to trust in any thing else.

He that doth place his hopes under the protection of great men, doth but pass away his Liberty into the Hands of Tyrants. He that founds his security on the Commonweal's, builds up his Comforts on great Improbabilities. He that counts Wealth the Mine of all Happiness, is not acquainted with the Wheel of Fortune; he that sooths himself with pleasures in worldly Knowledge, knows not enough the weakness and incertainty of our Understandings, as well as of all intelligible Subjects; and whosoever presumes upon his own Merits let him call to mind from whence he came, and whither he must return; being liable to Myriads of Infirmities, and to more than a single Death.

Friends themselves, and Health, (the best of humane enjoyments) are in this point like Honours, Riches, and other mortal entertainments, very short and transient, under the influences of a changing fate, subject to alterations from our own age; as much as from the malice of our Enemies.

Therefore, O Mortals! cast your Anchor on no other security but on my God; there is no Rock like him, as I have experienced. He can Love us freely, and Defend us fully, he doth heal our Infirmities, and makes up our Losses, he protects our Weakness, and succors our want.

Where he associates, there it is that Felicity both Roots and Flowers; To him let us have recourse every Watch of the Night, and every Minute of the Day. To him let us offer up both our Lives and Deaths, the Beginning, and Accomplishment of all our Undertakings.

Deut. 32. 4. For, he that is all Goodness, hath no other Scope but our Happiness. By how much the more our humane Ignorance tempts us out of the Road to Heaven, by so much the more his Pity strives to lead us the right way, and to keep us in it.

Prov. 30. 28.

For all universal Impiety weaves a Spider's Webb in every ones Mansion; and Pride heaps up Mountains of Guilt to defy Heaven; while Avarice scrapes up Dirt to make an Idol of it, and Lasciviousness dissolves its own pleasure by excess: though Gluttony returns often with the Dog, and Idleness looks after no good, nor Anger meets with any thing but Precipices.

Yet for all these the goodness of God abides continually, and is not discouraged by our Unworthiness, (when even this is aggravated

ted by his Love) but strives the rather to appear still as far above our Vileness, and beyond our Merits, as the Heavens are distanced from the lowest Earth.

And, shall I not fly to this City of Refuge, when pursued by a many ful-mouth'd Sins, that cry aloud for Vengeance? the Diseases and Corruptions of my Nature, and Condition, are not so inveterate, but there is Balm in *Gilead*, and a Physician there, who can ease them.

My Wounds, though festered by long and evil Habits, are not gangrened by Despair, nor is thy Hand shrunk up into thy Bosom, but thou wilt put it forth to reach me a Cure. Thy Remedies, O Lord! are always ready as thy mind to recover us. and thou art never weary of well doing.

Thou alone canst reduce me into a state of doing better than I have done, Thou alone canst pour the Oyle and Wine into my Hurts, and bear the Charges of my Recovery. Lord! lay down the price of this, and give Bail for me thy Insoluble Debtor.

As thou didst upon the cursed Tree Redeem thy *Israel* from trouble, so let the Merits of thy bitter Passion be the powerful means of my deliverance from the slaveries of Sin, that I may serve thee without base Fear, without any great Disease, or Disgust, or Luke-warm indifference.

It must be the heat of thy Love which can dissipate such bad Distempers of my Soul, as have brought an Ague upon my Devotion, and a Plague upon my Heart. Lord! see me set right again, by the health of thy Countenance; when I am made whole, see that I Sin not again, lest worse things fall upon me. But assure the whole residue of my time, by such a just and severe Repentance, (for my past Infirmities) as that I may never relapse into them, nor thou strive with me, who have contended too long with thee: But crowning the greatness of thy Glories, by the Pardon of my greatest Sins, thou mayest give me leave to rely wholly on thy sweet Compassion, till I may take Harbour in a Course of Sanctity, in the state of Justification, and at last, in a full and perfect Redemption. *Amen.*

M

The

The twelfth Step on the twelfth PSALM of Degrees, being the 131 PSALM.

Domine, non est exaltatum Cor, &c.

O Lord! I perceive the greatest Enemy of Mankind leaves no means un-attempted whereby he may draw us out of thy blessed way. Sometimes with prosperous Success, and sometimes with earthly Grandeurs, he well-nigh masters such (to their Eternal Ruine) as he durst not assail by Crosses, or by Want.

At other times, when neither fair means nor foul will do his Work, he takes a stranger course, and represents to those too good Opinions, (which we ordinarily have of our selves) a long Bead-roll of Religious Performances, that wee Priding our selves in our own doings might infect them, and arrogate that to our own merit, which is wholly due to thy goodness.

* Aristot. in
Eth. 1. 4. &
4. 3. inquit,
"Οι χαίροντες
ἐν περὶ λόγῳ,
αὐτὸν ἀναστὰς
ἐν ἑαυτοῖς
διὰ τὸ μὴ εἶναι ἀγαθόν.
Ita fecerunt Optimi Gentium (Stoicorum scilicet & Epicuræorum) qui dixerunt. Nos ex-
æquat Victoria Cælo, immo & ipse Philosophorum & Romanorum Imperator, Marcus Aurelius erat fame sua curi-
osissimus, &c.

* The Best men of all are too much addicted to this Sacrilege; and few there are, alas! who are so well bred in Humility, as not to like their own Reputation, or not to covet Glory here, no less than above.

Who doth not think too well or too much of his Service, if it appear faithful to God, and Charitable to others? while he is patient in Adversity, and temperate in all his Desires; Is he not apt to be exalted above measure?

Therefore while I purpose with my self to avoid the Pride and Poms of the World, and to give my self up wholly to the execution of thy Commands, let not my Heart applaud it self in private, but so turn mine Eyes to thy Testimonies, that they may not cause, nor discover any Vain-glory about me.

Give me such a likeness to my *Jesus*, such a lowliness of Spirit, as to refer all things duely to thy bounty, and nothing to my Power or Merit.

And as by the excesses of undeserved loving-kindness, thou hast advantaged my Birth with the Characters of Illustrious Parentage. Thou hast enriched my Well-being with many temporal Honours, and Privileges above others: so grant that I may not exceed the Limits of my Duty, nor presume to take thy Praises to my self.

For my Birth (whether high or low) was not my choice, but thy good Will, and I can no more secure my Life, than I could at first chuse it. For my Death shall come as my Life did, when it shall please thee to send it; and that too, shall pull off all disguises; leaving me naked, as from my Mothers Womb, and in no better a condition than

than the poorest Mortal. And this the Princely *Job* taught both himself and us, when humbled to the very Dunghill. *Job* 1. 20, 21.

“Worldly Honours are designed by thy good Providence to be Spurs to our Vertue, while we ride through the short Stages of this frail Life, and they should be looked on as streams issuing from thee their Fountain; so that when we grow proud of them we kick against thee, and make brutish returns of Ingratefulness to thy special favours.

Humane Learning (which is meer ignorance in respect of thy knowledg) is an Oyntment that is fly-blown, corrupt and unfavoury; when the Philosopher is such a Fool as to glory in his Wisdom.

Therefore entertain my notions, good Lord! within the compass of a just moderation, that they may not boil over with conceit, or opinion; nor build Castles in the Air, (like *Aesop's* Eagles) soaring above the proper reach of my own capacities.

Give me, I beseech thee, an exact and sober understanding of my self, that Pride may have nothing to do within me, nor without. But that Humility may take its right place about me, and not be wrongfully ejected by Worldly Circumstances.

Though Titles, Wealth, and Friends, may difference me from others. Gracious Father! I desire that my best skill may be used in the accommodating me to others, in the levelling my conceit of my self to him that hath the meanest thoughts of me; while I confess my self as miserable a Sinner as mortal a Creature; as the most abject wretch in the World can be.

If I strive for Precedence, let it be only as Christ's Disciples did, to be nearer to *Jesus*, to out-strip others in Prayer, and Fasting, and such like Acts of Piety as may prove, that I have drank of his Cup of Grace.

I would divest my self of all such habits as like false Glasses render me bigger than the Life, and count my best efforts for thee to be nothing in comparison of what thou hast done ^{for} me, dear Saviour! and thus will I traffick for true Glory, by getting all the Praise and Honour which I can for thee, till I come into the Harbour of thy Eternal Grace, and Goodness.

Should I indulge the Pride of my Nature, I should lose the pleasure of thy Love. For Pride is a Sin so hainous as that it could transform an Angel, and throw him out of Heaven, and Man out of Paradise, for both their High-Treasons against thy Majesty; whereas Humility is the eldest Sister of the Graces, and the first born of the Beatitudes, having promises like the Fifth Commandment, both for this Life and a better; and although Haughtiness of Temper is one of the Goads of Nature which pushes Man forward (since he was made with expectation of Dominion) yet Lord! abase this Domineering humour, least Pride, that is the Queen of Vice, and first begotten Child of Sin, and the immediate Successor of Wrath, and Vengeance, lest Pride, I say, should get the better of that Lowliness, I would still keep in my Soul for the better imitation of my Saviour.

When I consider how that dangerous forementioned Crime hath armed Legions of Angels to revenge it; “I fear lest it should make me be (not like *David* in this *Psalms*) but like an unhappy Child of

"*Rachel*, snatched away from the Bosom of my dearest Parent, as unworthy of the sweet and precious Milk of thy Word; or of any Spiritual refreshment.

But for all Humility is so needful, (as the Mother of Vertues) yet a man should not rely upon the brittle staff of the best natural performances; even in the very Duty of meekness, and lowliness of Mind. Since our Salvation is secured by thy goodness, and in our holiest Operations there is no Merit to Redeem us from Sin, or to entail thy Graces on us, upon thee alone we must ground our hopes; from thee only springs our Happiness, by thy good pleasure Eternity is consigned to us.

He that sets his Heart on Riches, what doth he, but rear up Pinnacles, whereon his Soul may be tempted, and his Life indangered? Gold is said to be Devoted to *Pluto*, because he that trusts therein can promise himself nothing at the last but the lowermost Pit. Honours, are rather the Gifts of Fortune than of Merit, and abandon, men usually at the approach of Calamities. Friends are gained by interest, and lost by Death, if not by some odd Casualty before. Health is short and fleeting, made so by change of Diet, Air, and every motion of Soul or Body. In fine,

All mortal Hopes and Joyes are liable to the Tempests of innumerable Accidents.

Thou only, Almighty Lord! art He that changeest not, and therefore art my safe Anchor-hold, and the Rock of my Hope.

In thee Devout Souls pitch their absolute trust, because there is no time wherein thou art not able, willing, and ready to accommodate them with Mercies, and with thine infinite Beneficence. *Amen.*

The

The thirteenth Step on the thirteenth PSALM
of Degrees, being the 132 PSALM.

Memento Domine, &c.

O Gracious Lord! Look with the Eyes of thine infinite compassion upon a wretched Sinner, and remember that I am thy Servant, I am thy Servant, and the Son of thy Handmaid; let me refuge my self now at thine Altars, though I have been such an Idolater, as to worship most of the World's Naughtiness.

I have adored earthly pleasures, yet deny me not thy favourable protection, look not upon me as on such an huge offender (who hath warred against thy Holiness, by heaps upon heaps of vain aspiring thoughts.) But,

Consider me as thy Creature, as a penitent and humble Convert, who may be a fit Object for thy mighty Compassion, through the sense I have at present of my Vileness. This is great, since I have been Impotent, Impious, nay Sacrilegious.

My Tongue hath dared to profane thy sacred Attributes. My Hands have not spared the Blood or Honour of others, my Heart hath pitched its delight among brutish and sensual pastimes, even such as have been repugnant to thy laws, and to those of Humanity.

But now that by my Conversion thou mayest be glorified; Hast thou not obliged thy self by the truth of thy promises, to receive such guilty ones as are *wearied and heavy laden?* because thou art a God of Mercy, and *There is more joy in Heaven for one Sinner that Repents, than for Ninety and nine such Righteous persons, as think with the Pharisees, they need no Repentance.*

I know mine Eyes have been treacherous Scouts to my Soul. I know mine Ears have been like the Adder's, and deaf to thy Commands, and to every good Exhortation, though open to the Whispers of a lying World. The motions of my outward man, like those of my inward, have been but to hurry me to ruine. I know my Heart hath been most vain in its desires, blind in its appetites, mad in that indulging of them: yet I rely upon thy Pity, and despair not of thy Forgiveness.

As thou didst comply with the Vehement struglings of *Jacob* for a Blessing, when he had cause enough to fear his own weakness; so do thou afford me thy Guidance and Protection, that I may not only begin well to turne towards Thee, but that I may go on from Strength to Strength to meet Thee, and if thy Grace so forward my Regeneration, I shall not doubt of performing what I have promised, (that is) to give Thee all which the devoutest Soul can offer.

My Heart would have no other place to recreate its affections in, but in the Presence-Chamber of thy Love.

N

What

What do the richest Marbles signify (though they have often sweat under the Tools of Cunning Workmen, for the adorning of some Closet for me) if my Rocky Heart be not broke by thy divine Precepts? The Battels wrought in Tapistry, which hide the nakedness of my Walls, do silently upbraid my Vanity, Hypocrisy, the Com-motions, and Quarrels that engage my Soul by many differing Passions; all which make spoil of my Reason, instead of serving her.

While the Eye Tires it self, through a long Prospect of Apartments, wherein much skill might be likewise tired by its Observations of Ten thousand Rarities: even there my Remembrance offers me an Inventory of my faults, which seem desperate enough to snatch the Golden Scepter of thy goodness, even out of thy Hand, and to cut me off from all hopes of Mercy.

Yet Lord! cast me out of doors, let me be onely covered with the Canopy of Heaven; take away, not onely my Fineness and Superfluities, but my Ease and Prosperity: nay, even my Houses and Lands, my other Comforts, and Health too, from me, rather than deny me thy Grace, for what greater Blessing can I beg than it?

The Favours of Princes are lightnings that blind us with their Splendor. Riches and Beauty corrupt daily; They seemingly depend upon strange uncertain accidents.

Power and Honours are no less dangerous than Elevating: But the possession of thy Favour is a boundless Gulf of Happiness. What Golden Shours of ineffable sweetness are pour'd into their breasts who enjoy the priviledg thereof?

Wherefore although I should deny Sleep to mine Eyes, and Slumber to their Lids, for thy sake, O God! yet even by such actions I should meet with the greater Repose: nay, with that unspeakable Quiet, and serenity of thy beloved and chosen People.

So that I desire not that any part of me should find Ease and Rest, without a sensibility of thy Grace, and a respect to thy Will.

All my Bones shall say, *Lord! who is like thee?* and as thou hast obliged, so do thou unite all my disorderly affections: Bind them with the Cords of Divine Love unto thine Altars; that they may not be undone by the dissoluteness of this Age; strengthen my Weakness, encourage my Resolutions to get the better of my Frailties, and of my Inconstancy, least I fall into every Temptation of Sin, or Snare of the Devil. I seek no farther security than thy Favour, no fairer Boon than thy Grace, no fuller Bliss than thy Bosom affords.

But to obtain these, Lord! there is requisite a more intire Obedience to thy Will, a continued Repentance of my Transgressions, and a resolution fixed rather upon dying than offending Thee any more.

And is not this Disposition the *Ephratah* mentioned, wherein we may find *Christ*?

Surely he that can behave himself Righteously, Soberly, and Holily towards the World, Himself, and Satan, need not doubt but that he may see God's Face, and Live also.

For God is good, and doth good to all such as keep his Testimonies, and walk in his wayes.

"Where there is any goodness, he will not be a far off, Where
"there is any true Piety there is God at hand: for he loves to Crown
"his own Gifts, and to Glorify his own Graces, and to have his
"delights

“delights with the Sons of Men, when these are willing to become
“the Sons of God, by coming to his onely begotten *Jesus Christ*.

This I have found by experience; and how great is my Obligation to thee, most dear Redeemer! who would suffer thy self to be found in the sharp Covert of my Breast, in that strong Wood, where Sin left none of the Cedars of God (which are full of Sap) but only a few Shrubs of impotent affections, which are so full of Briars, and Asperities, as that they opposed thy entrance into my Soul, and presented Thee with nothing, but another Crown of Thorns.

Yet since I have not onely heard of Thee with the Hearing of the Ear, but my other Senses have been sufficient Witnesses of thy inestimable Kindness, and of thy Addresses to me, that I might find thee. O that I may find such favour in thy sight, as to have a sight still of thy Favour! Let my Worshipping of Thee keep some measure with thy Working upon me, that I may be renewed day by day.

Undress my Soul of all such mean Garbs, and sinful Compliances, as will render it uncomely or unfit for thy sight. This Soul, dear Lord! of which thou wouldst be the Maker and Redeemer also; doth not more triumph in thy present bounty than it is afraid to forfeit it. Therefore,

Come now, and take up thy abode therein: Shall my Sins keep Thee knocking at the Door? No, dearest Lord! come in; my Lord come in while I am ready (as thy Spouse should always be) to entertain Thee my beloved Bridegroom.

What Sinners need despair of Mercy, while a Saviour Invites, Intreats, and even pulls them by force out of the *Sodom* of their Sins and dangers, unto a Repentance which may bring them to Salvation? And,

How easily is Heaven opened by the Tears of Contrition? How pleased is the Divine Pity at such Tears?

These Showers return again upon the Earth with Peace to it, Good will to Men, they bring God Glory, and his Glory to us, they cause Heaven's Jubile, and the Angels Triumph, because the Return of a Sinner is the most grateful Tribute that the Creature can offer to its Creator, and God delights himself in the Election of such Instruments as are changed from Vessels of dishonour, and fitted for his service by Conversion: Since the procurement of his Grace and Favour is not the Fruit of our Merit, but of his own Goodness.

For all we may Weep, Sigh, Pray, Fast, make Restitution, give Almes, resolve against Sin, and mortify our Passions, and bridle our Affections, and our corrupt Appetites, in some decent manner; yet our Nature hath many Frailties, and renders our best deeds so imperfect, as without the excess of thy Compassion, without the Merits of Christ's sufferings we should still be found such wicked and unprofitable Servants, as to have no more hope than worth in our best performances.

On therefore, O my Soul! and (for all thy former demerits) endeavour by the devoutest applications of God's Grace to be raised unto Mount *Sion*: and to be made thy self a Temple, an Habitation for the God of *Jacob*, where thy Lord himself may delight to dwell; thou canst not aspire to more Happiness than to be a Mansion for his Son, and Spirit.

Therefore know the way of truth, and walk in it, make right paths for thy Feet, since they that wander through Ignorance, are lost or confounded by their own darknes.

Let thy Knowledge, and thy Zeal prevent thy self, and other Sinners too, from rejoicing in their own Errors; by due Austerities detourn them from their Perverseness. By good Counsel assist others in their affairs, and succor them in their affliction. With the Shield of Patience break through the thickest Ranks of thine Adversaries, and overcome them by thy Charity. Receiving Injuries without being galled by them, without retorting such venomd Artillery, but rather pray for Enemies, do good to such as hate and persecute, and then thou shalt find (as the Hospitable King of *Israel* did) that God shall be on thy side, and more for thee than against thee.

But woe to that Soul that by its dis-belief of God's Word hath trespassed so hainously, as to drive away God's Love that was unwilling to leave it. Woe to that Soul which becomes blind by its profane Obstinacy, in such a manner as to make it self an Object of God's Scorn and derision then, when it might be the Object of his Love and Delight!

No Words, no Thought can exemplify the direful miseries of that State, which becomes so infinitely wretched as not onely to be left Sentenced by God, but justly Punished and Condemned: "Nay, Scorned and derided and instead of being pitied by the unspeakable Bowels of an Heavenly Father, (for its perpetual loss and torment) have the Furnace of Hell made seven times hotter, by the derision of God and holy Angels, as if they rejoiced, and took pleasure in the Pains of the Damned: while they adore and praise the Justice, and Holiness of God, in giving to each one his due. And,

"Thus it comes to pass, as there is Joy in Heaven for the conversion of a Penitent, so there may be Joy too there, for the eternal Punishment, and deserved Ruine of an un-repenting and obstinate Offender.

Prov. 1. 24.

"As we may infer from the words of Divine Wisdom spoken in the First Chapter of *Proverbs* from the 24th Vers. to the end of that Chapter.

"So that of all those many Showers of Grace that God so plentifully and continually sends down, in these days of our Visitation; there will not be one drop left to cool the tongue of a Dives, when he may be sweltring in perpetual Flames. All that which might have nourished and feasted the Soul; turns to its Poyson, and infects it more with the Disease and Nature of the Devils.

Dan. 4. 12, 13. But on the other side, "How blessed is the choice Spirit which laying hold on the Promise, and obeying the Precepts of its God, thrives so wonderfully under his gracious Blessing, as to be fruitful notwithstanding its height, and out of danger of falling.

"No evil Spirit shall have power to cast it down since it is watched by an Angel, and an Holy one receiving the Birds of Paradise within its Arms.

O Lord! What Solace, and what Happiness may I not secure to my self, if I have the favour of thy good Will and Protection? for thou dost not baffle the hopes of such as anchor themselves upon the Rock *Christ Jesus*; thou dost not break the Knees that are bowed down, or bruised in their frequent Devotion before thee.

Thou

Thou dost not weary our Expectations, neither dost thou hate our Prayers or our Persons : but thou lovest thy Creature, yet not his Sin, Thou hearest his requests by Christ's Intercessions.

Thy Promises (not blended with self-interest) are never subject to alteration, as men's are too much. Thine immense bounty is the Parent of thy good Will to Mankind ; and is unchangeable, because exempt both from Jealousy and Fear. Thy wisest Providence leads all our operations through several amazing Labyrinths to most excellent ends, and many times far otherwise than we designed them.

Thy Mercy, that is so tender as to be wrought on by a Mortal's Sigh or Tear, calls every Sinner, watches, and waits his leisure (as it were) accepts and welcomes him almost at any time, after it hath provided the Festival too for his Cheer, without any Contribution, or Charges of the Guest.

Thy Wisdom is a depth past fathoming too, and therein like, (though transcending our Demerits) it knows (though we do not) always who are thine, and can work good and Glory out of the worst of man's Misery, and the Devils Malice.

O that this fore-praised Wisdom, and Love of thine, may work these following Effects.

First, Let the one subdue those Adversaries of thy Glory, and my Good, who oppose themselves to my thorough Conversion, Tyrannizing over my Will, and perverting the devout Affections that now and then warm my Heart.

Secondly, Let the other enrich my Soul with Grace. As *David* was blessed in thy Love, and became an Illustrious Instrument for the advancing thy Glory : So I may be installed for ever with the tokens of thy Favour, and with the ornaments of thy meek and holy Spirit.

I see the World arrayed with Vanity, and dawbed over with excesses, its sweets (like too hot perfumes) strongly assault the weakness of our senses, and the softness of my Constitution discover the Rebelions of the Flesh against the Spirit.

I fear my Levity, and inconsideration will lay me open to the inveiglements of my subtillest Foes. And shall I not pray then against their wickedness? that thou wouldest frustrate their attempts against me, and confound their Devices. Least I be confounded, who repair to thy holiest Sanctuary for Protection.

Save me then, O Lord ! who Renouncing the Devil and his Works, and forsaking the Poms and Vanities of this wicked World, and all the sinfull Lusts of the Flesh, would be faithful unto death, and receive from thee alone a Crown of Life, of Grace here, and Glory hereafter. *Amen.*

The fourteenth Step on the fourteenth PSALM
of Degrees, being the 133 PSALM.

Ecce quam bonum, &c.

Lift up thy self, O my Soul ! and be thou raised up from the burthen of my Sins, unto the Throne of the Most High : for though God be the absolute dispenser of his own Grace, yet he loves to have it coveted, and looked after by Mankind, since his delights are placed amongst us. Be sure not to leave his presence ; wander no more like a *Cain* from his sight : for although nothing be covered from his inspection, yet as he that travels far Northward banishes himself from the Sun's power, and will not be advantaged by his heat, so much as if he stayed near the place where the Sun makes his Bed at Noon : So neither can he receive the warmest influences of Gods Favour, who departs from it, like an offending *Adam*.

Therefore, O my Soul ! Renounce thy Worldly affections altogether, and know that whosoever leaves his Heart to be entrapped by the fair semblances of Earthly Toys, may lose his share in an Eternity of Glory, while he embraces nothing but a Cloud, and catches unhappily at a Shadow.

Alas ! all Sublunary things are too slight to be compared with the pleasures at God's Right-hand. What is most compleat here is ever assailed by its contraries, and what appears most Gygantick, or mighty, is but the greater Imposture, cheating our apprehension by the cast of a huge Shadow.

That which is sweetest to our Senses is incompass'd with the most stings, as our loveliest Roses have the sharpest prickles ; here is no Hony but what is scoured with Wormwood, and the whole course of our Lives is but a *L'ambigue*, a strange Hotchpotch of Good and Evil. But in God, in God alone is found true Good, and perfect Happiness.

Many things that are useful are not pleasant, and many pleasant things are noxious. Fasting, Abstinence, and large Alms-deeds enrich the Mind, mortify the Passions, while they seem to impair our Worldly Concernments.

On the contrary, the satisfaction of sensuality may careffe the Body, but they torture the Soul. In God alone meets that Profit and pleasure which constitute the chief Good. Therefore,

O my Soul ! with fervent Devotion, sincere Conversion, and settled Resolution, be fixed to thy Redeemer, and enjoy such blifs as is made over to those who are acquainted with God's Mind, and obedient to his Commands.

How unhappy are the Scorners of such acquaintance, and Union with God ; Sit not thou in their place, if thou meanest to be happy :
for

for they have took leave of their Felicity, they have shook hands with Faith, and Charity; they are Eclipsed from the Beams of the Sun of Righteousness.

Yet let those sottish Animals inform me (if they can) why the bright Planet of the Day is so welcom to universal Nature? Why the sending forth its Light and Heat draws up their Eyes, and the Faculties of the whole World, as it were, to the admiration of it self? Why are the four Elements so needful, if they be not Communicative and assistant to every Body? and is not the Maker of these much more wonderful, as much more necessary to us all?

He that will lean to his own imaginations, makes them his Idols; and forfeits the Inheritance, that might be had by Communion with God. But he that with a right affection, and with Filial Reverence binds up all Cravings within the good pleasure, and will of God, may receive all the Joys that can be handed to him by a Deity, for such an Observance. Such Union of a Soul to Christ, is more sweet and acceptable to Heaven, than was that holy Oyle which the High-priests onely were to make and use.

And as the Heavenly dew that falls upon the Hills of *Hermon*, and of *Sion*, brings Fruitfulness to their Rocks, and Health to their Inhabitants, so the Largesses of the Divine Bounty, many ways advantage all such as are united to a Saviour, and to one another by a copious Charity.

The Dew comes down silently from Heaven, and waters the Earth, being nourishing, and medicinal: and such a Celestial thing is Love and Concord, Curing all the Diseases of the Mind.

It softens the very Marbles of a proud *Niobe*, improves the sterile bottom of Good-works; sweetens the Asperities of Contrition, and prevents the withering of our Hopes.

Send down this precious Dew upon my Soul, O Lord! as thou didst another on the Fleece of *Gideon*, that being over-shadowed by thy Love, I may never Divorce my self again from it, but value my affections (as thou dost) even as Faculties more considerable than are all those earthly Objects upon which they have been too often cast away: but since Mundanities are so imperfect Comforts, & so vanishing; they should be despicable. And I would devote my Heart altogether to those Joys of thine, which are Eternal.

Guard it therefore with a generous Fortitude to resist all the assaults of the Devil, to disarm all my Senses, to defeat all my Corruptions, from ever having any more Power to make me rebel against thy Goodness. And, Lord! command all the Forces of my Soul to concur in the desires of thy Mercy, in the doing thy Will, in the magnifying thy Greatness; so shall I be secure of thy Grace here, and of thy Glory hereafter. *Amen.*

The fifteenth Step on the fifteenth PSALM of Degrees, being the 134 PSALM.

Ecce nunc benedicite.

O My Soul! how art thou engaged by the Mercies of thy Creator to reinforce thy Powers for the setting forth his Praise; Now lay the Top-stone of thy Happiness in the blessing of thy dear Redeemer; who hath suffered thee to get up thus near unto him, and to free thee from Sin, hath shewed the mighty skill of his Mercy in diverse manners.

First, In the delivering thee from the perils of Infidelity and Profaneness:

Secondly, In giving thee the due confidence thou oughtest to have in his Goodness.

Thirdly, In letting thee see how all true pleasures flow from him, who is all Love and Kindness.

Hath he enriched thee with the Ornaments of Hope? Hath he built thee upon the Groundwork of Charity, with the strength of a right Faith? Hath he taught thee the fear of the Lord, and the respect due to his Command? Hath he shewed thee the Consequence of Holy Sorrow, Meekness, and Exinanition? and at last invited thee to all Happiness, by a perfect union to Himself? And,

“Art thou not inaugurated with a Crown of Privileges? Art thou “not wholly subdued to God, and overcome by such powerful Reasons to confess, that Religion must needs be thy greatest advantage, “and highest advancement also?

Then forget not thy self so much as not to exalt his Merits, and bless his Mercy, and declare what he hath done for thee, as Loudly, as Plainly, as Continually, as 'tis possible for thee to do.

If thou slip the time for these requisite performances, (and which is thy time but the present?) It will look like an Act of Ingratitude, and an effect of Obduration.

To the wicked, saith God, *What hast thou to do to take my Name in thy Mouth, since thou hatest to be reformed.* O Lord! thou wilt have none of their Commendations, who indeed are unworthy to utter thy holiest Name, being thy professed Enemies, their Addresses are but like the gnashings of the Damned, meer Profanations, and no Worship of Thee.

But thy Servants are the Ecchoing Trumpets of thy Goodness; Thou lovest their Eulogies, whom thou hast adorned with thy Favours, and Redeemed from the Tyranny of their Accuser.

Consider then again and again, O my Soul! how Great! how Incomprehensible! is the Goodness of thy God! since he would Create thee after his likeness, and give thee Understanding, and Dominion over and above thy Fellow-creatures? Since he would place thee at first but little lower than

than the Angels, and hereafter will promote thee even above those blessed Spirits; since he would save thee with no less a Price than his Son's Blood; and make thee the chief Magazine, or Store-house of all the Treasures of his Grace: since he would Manumitt thee by his Service, from the Tyranny of thy Sensualities, and from the Slavery of great Transgressions (which bind up *Lucifer* himself in Chains of Darknes.) O! do not fall (like him) again into the Hell of Ingratitude, since thou art raised thus into the Favour of the Most High: Employ thy faculties to his Honour, else thou art such another unworthy Monster as deserves to be entombed in the bottom of that Gulph which burns for Ever and Ever.

Shew at least how thou savourest the things of God, by acknowledging of them; 'Tis true, thou canst never render unto him according as thou hast received, yet return thy improved Talents, and thy utmost abilities, or else thy chearful readines, for the owning thy self Obliged, and not unkind, to the Donor.

Suffer no Excuse or Accident to put thee off from thinking of his Goodness, or from thanking of it.

Thy Prosperity is the Issue of his Providence, not of thy Merit: God (saith the Wise man) enables us to get Wealth, and all good Fortune. Thy Adversaries celebrate his Wisdom, for by them art thou taught how he knows thy desert, and would try thy Patience, and deals not so hardly by thee as he is provoked.

Therefore in all Conditions set forth his most worthy Praise; with clean Hands, and a pure Heart lifted up by devout Expressions. Let us lead on our Desires, and endeavours to set the Crown upon his Head, and to put the Scepter into his Hand, whose right it is.

I mean let our Church (with that which is Triumphant) ascribe All Honour, Power, Dominion, and Glory unto him who sits upon the Throne, and unto the Lamb, for evermore: blessing God every manner of way, whereby the Creature may be said to Glorify his maker. As,

First, By speaking of God with that Reverence which the Majesty of his Person doth require.

Secondly, By living according to the Rules of Probity, that by our good actions, both our selves and others may think well of his Service.

Thirdly, By rendering unto God the Honour due to his Name, in whatsoever condition ^{we} may be, that whether he gives or takes away, there may be no shipwreck of a good Conscience, or of a chearful Spirit, because we own our dependance not upon our selves but Him.

Fourthly, By Giving Thanks always for all things unto God, (as saith *Eph. 5. 20.* the Apostle) while we entertain a grateful Taft and Remembrance of the most ordinary Mercy, for there is none to be looked upon as little, if we justly regard either God or our selves.

NOW, most Gracious Lord! since thou hast called up my Soul to this exalted Throne of Felicity, to this highest Round of Heavenly Comfort, (to wit) to the resounding of thy Praises, for the efficacy of thy Favours towards a penitent Sinner: I beseech thee, dearest Lord! shower down continually thy Gifts and Graces upon my humbled Soul, that it may be fruitful in every good Work, and shew no wretched marks of its former Sterility, though it Merits not the

smallest Dew of thy Blessing, nor the least warmth of thy Love; (having scarce put out the fire of extravagant Lust.) Yet since thou hast founded the vast Machine of the Universe upon the empty place; Thine out-stretched arm can amend and sanctify whatever is amiss about me.

Thou art both our Lord, and our God; a Maker, and Redeemer too; whose Operations are beyond all impossibilities, and thy Benefits above our Desires, especially in Heavenly things, no less than above our Deserts.

However, give me leave, here at last, to beseech thee so to fit me for thine Eternal Entertainments, by a thankful Sense, and constant relish of thy Love and Goodness to me here, as that I may pass along safely and contentedly through the many disquiets of this mortal Life, to the continual Praising, and endless Fruition of thee in Heaven.

Our Father which art, &c,

THE

A

COROLLARY.

HAVING got up thus far by the help of others, (with aking Knees, and sobbing Respirations) my Soul craves leave to pause and look about her, lest these Ascents become to her condition, like the *Scala Gemmarum* to condemned Wretches; Degrees of Punishment, and sad occasions of more certain Ruine. These lofty Mounts afford me a fair prospect of the good Way my Thoughts should take toward Heaven: But, alas! I find at the same time how I am groveling upon Earth, and the feet of my Affections would rather step down, than go up so high a Hill, as that of God's House.

Therefore have I need of *Jacob's Staff* to lean upon in my infirmest State, and to point out how few and evil the days of the years of my Pilgrimage have been, and to fathom better both God's Love and mine, that I may get up still nearer the point of Life, (even in Death it self) and be keeping on my Journey here, for here is not my Rest.

And as I want a *Jacob's Staff*, (such a help and Monitor, and Vision, as that holy Traveller had at *Bethel*) so I desire likewise that *Jacob's Ladder*, which according to *St. Basil*, (in his Homilies on the *Psalms*) is the Exercise of a devout Soul, so employing it self, as that God may come down to it, and the Soul be raised up to Heaven, by these five several Degrees or Ascents.

The first is a generous neglect of all outward and temporal Advantages, in respect of Heavenly ones; a forsaking of our Nets, like true Converts, and Christian Disciples, for the attendance on the Lord *Jesus*; and not only renouncing (with *St. Paul*) such things as we counted Gain, but,

Secondly, Contemning, and even loathing the most admired sensual pleasures, nay, the World it self, when set in competition with Christ our Saviour:

Because, in the third place, we ought to love nothing in comparison of *Christ*, if we would be loved by him: If we esteem him not most amiable, we are not warmed with a right, or kindly flame of Devotion, (which implies a transcendent value for the adored Object of our Worship.) We are but *Samaritans* in our pretended Religion, and shall hardly arrive at the fourth Step,

Which is a readiness not only to be bound, but to dye for his Name: And this propensity for the meeting Death it self in the way to Life, is

a good Token or part of the noblest Mortification, which prefers God and his Sanctity before Life, nay, before Salvation, and will secure us from finding Death in the Errors of our Lives.

5. Nay, lastly, will strengthen us to climb up to the Top-round of these
Psal. 73. 25. Spiritual Exercises, even to the uniting our Souls by the divinest Cha-
John 4. 16. rity unto God himself, who is Love and the Man that can get thither
 (saith St. John) dwells in God, and God in him.

These Five *Ascents* are to be often mounted, and if in honour to the holiest Trinity, they are thrice gone over in our youthfulest, in our strongest, and in our oldest Age, we shall be perfect in our Duty by such Repetitions of it, and not think the *Fifteen Ascents to God's House* at all too many, or too steep, or tiresome.

F I N I S.

E R R A T A.

IN the Epistle to the Reader, Page 1. Line 28. for *quote*, read *Compt.*

l. 38. for *Sketch*, read *Sketch*. p. 4. l. 19. for *ones*, read *ends*. l. 49.

read *Heaven*. In the next Epistle of the Author, at l. 12. insert *its*. l. 2. l. 12.

read *to Heaven*. p. 3. l. 8. read *perfect ones*.

In the Book, p. 8. l. 7. read *thee*. p. 9. l. 2. read *it natural, and born with us*. l. 32. read *or recover it*.

Secondly, Containing, and of the World it self, when it is in comparison with Christ our Saviour.

Because in the first place we ought to be thankful for the things which we have received, and for the things which we are to receive.

And this property for the things which we are to receive, is the things which we are to receive, and the things which we are to receive.

Which is a property for the things which we are to receive, and the things which we are to receive.

And this property for the things which we are to receive, is the things which we are to receive, and the things which we are to receive.

Which is a property for the things which we are to receive, and the things which we are to receive.

T H E
Eucharist at Easter, 1657.
 O N T H E
Happy Recovery
 Of my Most Dear and Honour'd
LUCINDA.

ANGELS, come tune my Joys, since they require
 Notes pure and high, like those which ye inspire;
 Blest Saints of Heav'n! could ye impart your Mirth,
 Then might I learn to sing of one on Earth,
 One, who hath not your Glory. yet your Grace;
 One equals you in Piety, not Place,
 Because she lives: Nor can I more express
 To tell, what 'tis the World calls *Happiness*;
 And since she lives, I pray for nothing more,
 But how to praise that help I did implore.
 O God (who art most powerful) do thou please
 To give me thankfulness, who gav'st her ease;
 Give strength (as to her Body) to my Brain,
 That with her health, may Harmonize my strain,
 And breath still vigorously, like my past Fears,
 In Lines more numerous than were e'er my Tears;
 While every gladsome Verse records at once
 My Gods and Mothers Resurrections:
 Within the Spheres of which, two Bliss'es move,
 All I enjoy below, hope for above:
 But all my Words and Actions needs must be
 Lame Offerings, fit for *Vulcan*, not for Thee.
 I cannot sing like *David*, nor can I
 Be even like *Saul*, when *Saul* did prophecy;
 Yet by that Harp which was his cure, I find
 A Tongue to ease my overjoyed Mind:
 Therefore my Song shall fill the thankful Quire,
 My Voice shall consort with the *Hebrew* Lyre,
 To drown its Hoarseness in those sweeter Lays,
 So hiding my Defects, but not thy Praise.

The CXVI. PSALM.

1. **I** Love to praise thy Love most high,
Who to my I raise gav'st ear;
2. While I have Breath, to thee I'll cry,
For thou my Cry did'st hear.
3. Hell's Prison made my Soul afraid,
Death's Snares beset me round;
'Till to thy Name I fought for aid,
Nothing but Woes I found.
4. But when I pray'd, Lord ease my Woe,
O Lord! save thou my Soul;
5. His Grace and Goodness God did show,
Making his Patient whole.
6. His Love and Justice is display'd,
Shielding the lowly'st Head;
And raising mine, whom Grief had laid
Down low, even near the Dead.
7. Then Soul, said I, gad not abroad,
To lose thy fought-for Rest:
¹¹⁰⁰ ~~How~~ ^{Cost} Love fills the Heart of God;
O make that Love thy rest:
8. That Love, which keeps thee from the Grave,
Thy Foot from falls, thine Eye
9. From Tears, and gives thee Life to have
This spent in Piety.
10. Thus I believ'd, and therefore pray'd,
'Till Troubles shook my Trust;
11. Then rashly said, all Men are made
Of Falshood, as of Dust.
12. But what bring I to thee? I'll take
The Cup of Blessing, Lord;
13. And bless thy Name, whose Mercies make
Our Duty our Reward.
14. I'll pay my Vows in sight of them,
Whose Lives most holy are;
15. Whose Deaths are in thine Eyes esteem,
(As its own sight) most dear.
16. Thy Handmaid's Son, thy Servant Lord,
Thy Servant, Lord, am I!
Bound faster to thee by the Cord,
Which thou art pleas'd t'unt.

17. Ple offer still unto thy Name
My Life, my Praise, my Prayer;
18. Ple pay my Vows in sight of them,
Whose Lives most holy are.

*To God the Father, God the Son,
And God the Holy-Ghost,
Be Glory; and let every one
Strive who shall praise God most.*

HALLELUJAH.

The XXVII. PSALM.

LUCE tuâ fruamur LUCE.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>1. GOD is my Soul's dear Light, What should I fear but him? God is my Life's chief Health and Might, What else should dreadful seem?</p> <p>2. When wicked ones (my Foes) Approach me to devour, They shall fall down, for they that rose Have fall'n into my Pow'r.</p> <p>3. Though many Troops besiege, None shall my Heart dismay; Though Men against me Battel pitch, God's strength shall be my stay.</p> <p>4. This only Grace, this boon Of God I now desire; That in his House I may have room To pray in, and retire.</p> <p>5. There I his Pleasure tast, I have his shelter there; There on a Rock I shall be plac'd In times of Grief and Care.</p> <p>6. For all my Foes surround, When God their Siege hath rais'd; Around his Courts with joyful sound, God shall be greatly prais'd.</p> <p>7. O therefore hear me, Lord, When I rejoyce or cry! Comfort or Mercy still afford, And to my Call reply.</p> <p>8. When once it heard thy Grace, my Heart to thee could speak;</p> | <p>O Lord, thou said'st, <i>Seek ye my Face!</i> Thy Face, Lord, will I seek.</p> <p>9. Thy Face O never hide, Nor turn it once away! O Leave me not, my God, my Guide, Whose strength is all my stay!</p> <p>10. When Friends no care had took, Thou didst for me provide; Nay, when my Parents me forsook, Thou laid'st me not aside.</p> <p>11. Lord, teach me thy plain way, To shun each crooked Path; Because my Foes would have me stray,</p> <p>12. O save me from their wrath! See how the Faithless rise Against me, and their Breath Would first ensnare by Calumnies, Then cut me off by Death.</p> <p>13. Lord, I had fainted quite, Had I not hop'd to see Thy Goodness in this Life, to light My Soul t' Eternity.</p> <p>14. Wait then on God, poor Soul! Take Courage, kiss his Rod; For he shall make thee strong, and whole, Wait then I say on God.</p> <p><i>Glory and Praise allow To God in Trinity, As at the first he was, is now, And evermore shall be.</i></p> |
|--|--|

The XXIII. PSALM Paraphras'd.

THE King of Heav'n, the God of Love,
Takes up a Shepherd's Crook;
(As David did) his Son above,
To his few Sheep will look:
Then, though in Deserts they are left,
How safe are those few Sheep!
How safe am I from wolfish Theft,
Where Christ the Fold doth keep.

1 Sam. 17. 20.

For while I wake, he lets me feed
 By th' Sunshine of his Eye;
 When I want Rest, (if ought I need)
 His Arm's my Canopy:
 So that I shall not fear Death's Night;
 Nay, when Time's Bell has gone,
 Darkness (that harbours many a Sp'rite)
 Shall let my Soul alone.

W turn.

My Soul, array'd then in its Light,
 Such Glories shall put on,
 As they that make my Shepherd white,
 Who is my Shield, and Sun.
 He from a howling WilderNESS,
 (Of Savages th' Aboard)
 Hath brought me by his right Address
 Into fair *Canaan's* Road.

There up and down meek Lambs he leads,
 While Tides of Joy flow by;
 Can his Flock want, who kindly feeds
 Young Ravens, when they cry?

Exod. 14. 2.

Like *Israel's* Leader by the Flood,

He bids his Army stay;

1 King. 19. 8.

Then (as he gave *Elijah* Food)

He cheers them in their way.

Return.

The pow'r and goodness of our God

Exod. 14. 16.

Are our advance and stay;

2 King. 4. 29.

Elisba's Staff, and *Moses's* Rod;

Do Wonders less than they:

They save the Poor, support the Weak;

Heal sick Folks, help the Blind:

Soft Hearts they bend, hard ones they break;

Thus nurturing the Unkind.

For all *Saul's* envy, *Doeg's* hate,

My Head and Beard is crown'd;

In spite of Foes I sit in state,

With Ease and Plenty round.

My Bowl's with Wine swell'd to the brim,

With Oyl my Temples shine;

God is with me, e're I with him;

His Goodness 'tis, not mine.

Return.

His Grace (and not their own) anoints

Kings, to the sway they bear;

His Spirit Royal Feasts appoints,

His Son is our best Cheer.

O that towards God my days could move

Fast, as to Death they tend!

My Thanks should keep pace with his Love,

And (like it) never

E N D.

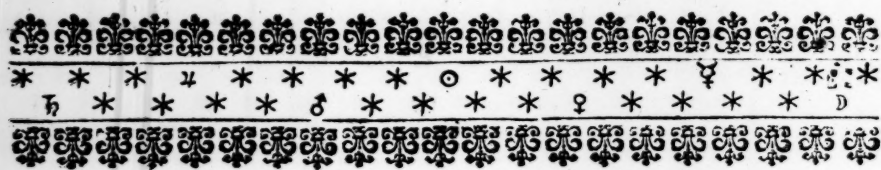


LA SCALA SANTA:
OR,
A Scale of Devotions
MUSICAL and GRADUAL:
BEING
DESCANTS
ON THE
Fifteen Psalms of Degrees,
IN METRE;
With Contemplations and Collects upon them,
IN PROSE, 1670.

Ἐι γδ νῦν εἴχημι ἄλλο τι ἔδει ἡμᾶς πιεῖν, καὶ κοινῇ, καὶ ἰδίᾳ; ἢ ὑμνεῖν τὸ θεῖον,
καὶ διφημεῖν, καὶ ἐπεξέρχεσθαι πᾶσι χάριτας, ἐκ ἑδῆς καὶ σκάπτονται, καὶ ἀρῶνται, καὶ
ἐκδιόντας ἀδεῖν τὸ ὕμνον τὸ εἰς τὸ θεόν.

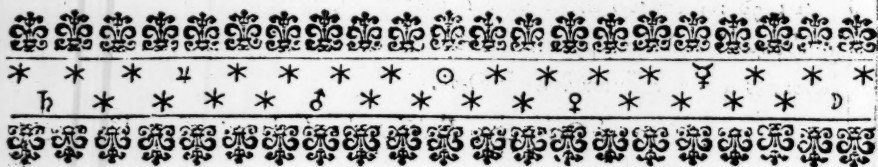
Μέγας ὁ Θεός, &c. *Epictet. in Arrian. Dissert. lib. i. cap. 17.*

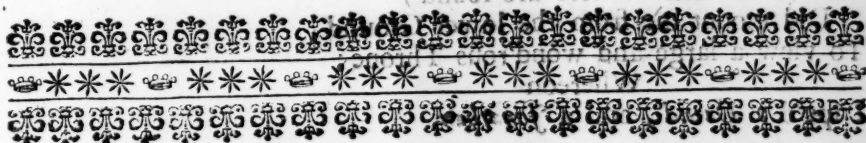
LONDON,
Printed by A. Godbid and J. Playford, Anno Dom. 1681.



THE
MIND
OF THE
FRONTISPIECE.

Greatness and Piety combine
To make the *Psalmist* Divine :
(Good Actions following pure Intents)
His Soul ASCENDS, his God ASSENTS.





TO THE
Right Honourable
THE LEARNED
AUTHOR.

A PINDARIQUE ODE.



Reize up dull Quill, and never Dormant lye
Upon thy Cotton Pillow, stiff and dry;
Useless, and void of all Activity.
Ple not disturb thy Rest
To travel long, in quest
Of some impertinent Romance,
To Ape the fond or sighing Lover:
No, for by chance
I lately did discover,

In a fair view upon the Prospect-Land,
Greatness and Goodness walking hand in hand.

By the safe Conduct of a gentle Muse
I trac'd a Royal Court,
Which led me to the Sacred Fort,
Where Strength and Beauty might amule.

D E D I C A T I O N

Fifteen Ascents of fair and precious Stone,
(Not such as here are found)

Did mount me from the lower Ground,
To view a large and wond'rous Throne;

Whereon

I spy'd a *David*, and a *Jonathan*.

III.

A *Jonathan*, who whilom did employ

His Quill, to imp his Dart;

Whereby not to annoy

Young *Jesse's* Heart:

But Love, and needful Secrets to impart.

One who is able to engage

With the *Goliaths* of the Age:

Those Debauchees, who complement

A Cloud; and labour to entice

The very Principles of Vertue into Vice,

With gaudy and prophane Embellishment.

Now, for the wanton Fancy's sake,

Their Souls lye canker'd in the Rust

Of Ease ill-manag'd; now they make

Greatness a Pander unto Lust.

If ever Prophecy did nick the Times,

David forelaw their **Dytherambique* Rhimes;

For when he counts his Injuries and Wrongs,

He adds, **On me the Drunkards make their Songs.*

* *Scurrilis*
Cant. de Da-
vide & Bath.
non ita pridem
compos.

* *Psal. 69. 12.*

IV.

Of have I seen the Sun's declining Light

Drowsily nod down to the Lap of Night;

But when (next Morn) the Champion wakes,

(For 'tis not long he Dreams)

About the Globe's wide Lifts a gallant Ring he takes,

(Brandishing his Lance of Beams:)

And when he manages a well-drest Ray,

The Night-Mare Sleep (as frighted) starts away.

Old Darkness is dismounted by the brisk young Day:

The World's call'd up again, and Men revive

With a more strong assurance that they live.

Thus when the shades of Drollery possess

The Seat, where Virgin Muses once did rest:

When we despair'd that pious Lays,

Or useful Rhimes should e're more guild our Days;

A Star strangely propitious did appear,

Darting its Splendors from the wise Men's Hemisphere;

They'd much of Goodness, much of heav'nly Grace,

As far as that can mix with humane Race;

And did portend the overthrow

Of fordid Wit, (if that be *Wit* that some call'd so.)

to the A U T H O R.

V.

Their low-born Muse, arm'd with Poetic Rage,
And License, basely congeed to the Stage;
They trod mean Paths, whose whole Design and Wit
Could reach no farther than the Neighb'ring Pit.

When as your tow'ring Soul,
Leaving us beneath,
All humane Passions doth controul,
And mount into those Regions, where
Is nought but pure and subtle Air,
Where common Mortals cannot breath.

VI.

Go on, thou noble *Hero*, who dost know
The Paths of Honour, and of Vertue too;
A Soul so Skilful! so inur'd to Good!
Never proud *Greek* or *Roman* understood:
They only built a gaudy Theater
Sacred to Vertue; thou hast rais'd thy self to her:
Such a clean Lodging ev'ry Soul may boast,
Who bears the Temple of the Holy-Ghost.
Others for Pomp or Safety may provide
Against their fatal Day,

A costly Dungeon, or a *Memphian* Pyramid
(T' inclose their Souls too with their mould'ring Clay;)
While by the Virtue of thy sacred Fire,
(Decree'd not to expire)
Your Honour shall (surviving Fame)
Live in a heav'nly Cone of Flame.

VII.

When I peruse the Comment, and the Text,
Nothing I find so dubious, or perplex,

* By *Jewish* Fables, or Conceits of Men;

* *Tit. 1. 14*

But your unerring Pen
Dictator doth Commence,
And reconcile King *David's* sense,
With such Illustrations there,
As if thou wert his Privy-Counsellor:
Your Version modest, and yet faithful too;
Shews what thou dost, and able art to do.

VIII.

My Numbers must fall short, of what is due
To such pure Zeal, and depth of Judgment too:
Fifteen Degrees! Henceforth shall every Psalm
Boast, that it can
Receive the Honour of thy skilful Name,
THE CHIEF MUSICIAN.
Then, Pardon Sir, if I aspire
To kiss the lowest Step of your advanced Quire.

S. H.

AD NOBILISSIMUM
A U T H O R E M.



* Stantia
non pote-
rant testa
probare
Deos: Mart.
utpote
Christus
Templi Ex-
cidium præ-
sagivit.

Aetitet immensi Salomonem Machina Templi
Structorem, Graduum te Chorus ipse canit :
* Illius obruitur moles operosa ruinâ ,
Vim frustra his infers Vespasiane tuam.
Eicta Poetarum torpescant Numina, quorum
Gleba Sepulchralis Frigida Membra tegit :
Musarum Lymphis incassum labra retingunt,
Ni prunam Linguis prabeat Ara suis.

Vestris aspirat captis Dens ille Deorum,
Et sic Divino jure Poeta cluit.

Te meritò canimus ; cuius conscendere Scalam
Laurea subrepens ambitiosa cupit :

Te miseret Plantæ ; quoties tremebunda precatur
Ut Paradisiacis insita, vivat, Agri.

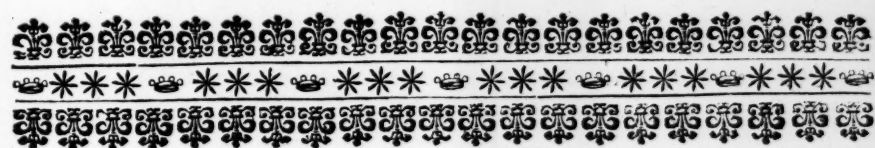
O Dilecte Deo ! pergas tibi ut Orbis Honore
Agnoscat nullum, nec Pietate, parem.

Oro, ut dignêris Triviæ Tentamina Musæ
Quâ placidâ semper Fronte, Videre soles :

Forsthan insolitum videar compingere Carmen ;
Scilicet appositè scribere causa vetat.

Honoris vestri obsequio deditissimus,

S. H.



TO THE
Most Illustrious
And Serenest
STELLA.

MADAM,



AS soon as Nature had awaked my Duty in the tender of its Devotion to Lucinda, I was prompted by Justice, as well as Love, to lay my next Offering at Your Feet, because I must avow to all the World, that nothing hath that Ascendant over my Soul as Ye Two have, who make my Passions high, yet honest; Ye are Twin-Stars of the first Magnitude, so that I cannot shew Ye my Respects, without advancing my Religion, Your Piety encouraging that unto some nobler Effort, while it instructs these in the most decent and humble ways of submitting my Desires to Heaven's acceptance first, and then to Your Graces.

Madam, You know I never yet approach'd You but with a Prayer, or with Musick, (admiring the Divinity which still arrays Your Person;) the Imitation of your Holy and Harmonious Mind, I think, is Work for the most Excellent upon Earth, as the Admira-

DEDICATION.

tion of it is my chiefest pleasure, and hath been the cause of publishing these the *Essays* of my younger time, (began about twenty years ago at my entrance into Your Service) when I aim'd at nothing but God's Grace, and Yours.

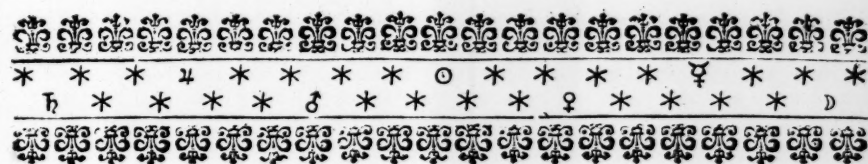
Madam, The intent of my first Affections would palliate their weaker Actings, since (as the strength of Zeal may still excuse some Errors) the Daughter of Time is here with a Gift, though the Daughter of Tyre be not in her Robes: Here is no gentile Vanity, or curious Texture of Wit; no Colours of Rhetorick, nor modish Points of Courtship, to inveigle Your Opinion of the present.

Yet, Madam, here is that, may well become Your Grace,
The most Angelike Dress, in fashion upon Earth;
The way to pierce the Skies, with Orisons and Praise;
The way to pass our Lives, in truest Ease, and Mirth.

I wish You like the making up of this Suit (as it is) with the truth of his Devotion and Service, who is ready to wait upon You (in his Holy-day habit) both to Your Closet, and to Our Church, as

M A D A M,

The humblest and faithfullest
of your Ministers.



THE P R E F A C E T O T H E R E A D E R.



HAVING with much admiration and delight been long conversant with the *Psalter*, I find, as it is wisely appointed for the first Book that we read or study, so it may fitly be used to the last minute of our Life and Breathing; since our blessed Lord himself handed his Soul unto his Father in these words of the

Psalmist. And I never knew any condition, how sad soever, that might not receive some Entertainment, some Company and Discourse (as well as *Music*), and so some ease and relief from that glorious Book of the *Psalms*; which is not only beautified by our Saviour his frequent use of it (both living and dying.) but by the continual Services, and best Devotion of all the Saints and Children of God: For (to say nothing of the Esteem it hath, even in the *Mahometan Religion*) there hath been no Church, either of *Jews* or *Christians*, nay, scarce one eminent Person in either of those Churches, who hath not only allowed much time and attention, but likewise shewn the greatest remarks of Piety and Zeal, in the studious perusal thereof. For these Spiritual Songs (as all sacred

Luke 23. 46.
Psal. 30. 6.

Mat. 21. 16.
21. 42.
27. 46.
22. 44.
13. 35.
John 2. 17.
6. 32.
10. 34.
13. 18.
15. 25.
19. 24.

Sixty Proofs
cited out of
the Psalms
in the N. T.
Psal. 1. 2.

Wor-

The PREFACE

Worship was of old wrapt up in *Metre*) do, with their most charming Melody, and sweetness of Expression, both set forth the Law of the Lord, and the love of his Servants, (as on Mount *Sion*, not on *Sinai*, viz.) in so lofty and taking a way, as that surely they contain not only the Body and Substance, but the Spirit and Quintessence, the pleasant Tasts, and best Relishes of our holiest Religion! Besides the variety of Subjects, and richness of each Theme, serving (as the Treasures of several Mines) for the furnishing and rewarding both our fancies and labours with Materials, sufficient to please, to profit, to enrich our Meditations. So that truly 'tis a ravishing, and no less than Heavenly delight, to hear the holy Persons of all Times and Ages (like Birds in the Spring) descanting on the self-same Subject; but with such different Notes, Melody, and Accent, as it is wonderful to observe (while every one doth well in doing his best,) what rare Divisions are run by the joyning of so full a Consort: Whilst the Music becomes more excellent by the admirable variety thereof.

This hath often set on work, and satisfied my Thoughts with the Contemplation of our Eternal employ, the praising of God in Heaven, perhaps too in the Songs of *David*, (as well as of *Moses*, since these were the Songs of the Lamb while he was here on *Sion*) according to our best Capacities and Visions: So that as the Angels envy not the Cherub for sitting higher, or seeing more than they; nor the Seraphim despise the Angels, because these cannot reach the others Pitch in their mighty Raptures and heavenly Addresses, (for they are all in the same way, though concerned in several degrees of Duty;) It is my opinion, that no true *Christian* should be discouraged, either by his own weakness, or others greater Abilities, from turning *Psalmodist*, and helping the Quire with his Notes, though they be of a harsher kind, and flatter Key, than many others which are used there; because both in the Church here, and that above, he must sing the same which others do, though (it may be) not with the same Elegance; yet if his Heart be right, and his Desires sincere, though his Place and Parts may be interiour to many, his good Will and Intent shall afford joy, satisfaction, and bliss, and secure him from the Censure of all others.

Nay, he may suppose the Music and the Mirth of Saints to arise like the Flame from those lowest Coals of the Altar, which

which lie obscurely in their Ashes; and thence to ascend by the Degrees of the Sons of Fire to the top of their lofty Pyramid, the Deity; and from that Central Point again stream forth such Harmony and Delight, as may reach and fill, enflame and enlighten, array and gild the whole Circumference of the Blest Eternity.

Therefore since he which hath the lowest Voice may bear a Part in Music, we should neither condemn nor hinder their singing, who cannot reach so high a strain as our selves; but bear with, or encourage, rather than silence and disturb the Devotions of the weakest, who may be more acceptable to God in their well-meaning, than we are to Men in our finer expressions.

Upon this account I have often judged it expedient, that Censure should be shut out of the Church Doors, when any ones Verse or Music is brought within them; and though we might be able to mend that which is there allowed, yet we are rather to use than blame it, because it is prescribed by such, whom we must yield best able to discern what is fit for the public Worship, which certainly differs from each Man's private Devotions, more than doth his Night-dress from the Habit he must wear at Noon-day.

So that though I might plead for *Hopkin's* and *Sternbold's*, for the meanest Translation of the Psalms in our Parish Churches, (as Men do for some Customs and Fashions) because countenanced by Authority and long Usage; yet I would not from thence conclude, that they are the best, or that I must keep them in my own Closet, or particular Devotions: But as I will not refuse them publicly whilst commanded, so I will not reproach them privately; much less censure or deter others in their singular Industry, who have not only design'd, but attempted, both to do better than the weakest Age of *English* Poetry; and withall, equal the strongest Reach of Sense and Expression that is found in the best Translators of the Psalms.

Amongst whom I would count two very late Authors, *Mr. S. W.* (who might be fancied the two Poles, including a World of *Mr. M. S.* our Rithmical Paraphrasts, and pretending something above them) but that the one seems to be in the excess of Gaudiness, and liberty of Fancy, while the other is in the worse extream of meanness of Verse, and want of plainness; so that as the former will be thought by some too Luxuriant and

The PREFACE

Copious, (both in Measure and Conceit) the latter will be found incurious, and fallen short of expectation; since he forgets the Poet, while he stoops to accommodate the People, and can neither afford Rhime to half his Lines, (which is easie enough to be had in our tinkling Tongue) nor clearness to his Verse, which might have excused the other defect, (and is but needful for the vulgar way of reading, and then singing) because the Sentence of his Verse too frequently out-runs the Measures; and so leaves that unfinished at the end of these; which surely is a fault that my self (as most others) may be guilty of sometimes in those short *Cæsura's* we make use of, but should be avoided with all possible care; for when the Stops reach farther than the Lines, the Breaks of these must needs be as unpleasant to the Ear, as it is commonly injurious to the Sence: And so are the big-belly'd *Epithetes* (the *καταβολαὶ*) wherewith some Versions abound, which are *Pedantic Charms*, conjuring Ignorance into Admiration, pleasing or employing those most of all, who least understand their use and meaning: Whereas the words of Truth and Soberness, such as were dictated by God's own Spirit, want (no Bombast) neither the *Dress* of *Dinah*, nor of *Thamar*, to make them seem wanton, and then *alluring*.

Acts 26. 25.
Gen. 34.
Gen. 38. 14.

1 Sam. 16.
12.

2 King. 9.
34.

The *Heathens* indeed set out their Fables, like Prostitutes, to put them off, and made them cried up by the mistakes of too many; but to trick up the most Sacred Poems in the mode of the Idolatrous *Ethnick*, is a License no Man hath a Patent for from Holy Writ: And though, with *Politian* and *Bonamy*, some have preferred *Pindar*, I think there are as many genuine Beauties, excellent Parts and Proportions in *David*, as in any uncircumcised *Philistine*, any monstrous *Pagan*, we can meet with: And as he appeared to *Samuel*, when God himself said, *Arise, anoint him, for this is he*; so when I look upon him in his Psalms, I guess surely the *Anointed of the Lord* is before me. How frequent, full, and admirable, are his Metaphors, Similies, Figures, and Enrichments of Phrase! All which ought to have right done them, (being the *Daughters* to so great a King) and to be cloathed according to their Quality and Excellency; and that is not with *Babylonish* Garments, with the Thread of *Egypt*, or the Garb of Aliens, but, like the Silk-worm, only with Robes spun out of their own Bowels; for they are rich enough to furnish them-

themselves (as the *Israelites* did their *Tabernacle*) both with Coverings and Ornaments: And as the Armour of *Saul* did not fit *David's* Person, no more doth extravagant Words or Conceits become his Poems; who is said to be as *prudent* in 1 Sam. 16; his Speech, as *skilful* in his Music. 18.

And seeing there are such apposite Allusions and Relations in each part of these Divine Poems to the other Portions of holy Writ, which (as the Rays of the Sun do to the World) dart Light and Beauty from one corner of the Bible to the other; we need repair to no other Wardrobe than the Book of God, for the trimming out any part of it, with sufficient elegance, fulness, and embellishment.

Therefore I endeavour in these Essays, not only to have as much of the sence of the Psalm, but likewise of such other Scriptures as it may seem to relate to, (whereby it may be unfolded and adorned) that they might be composed in the plainest *English*, and easiest manner of Verse; yet with as much of holy Writ as can be put into them, studying for Congruity between them and the Original, more than Curiosity in the Texture; and to be full, though not prolix; and useful to some, if not pleasant.

St. Hillary shews us from the *Revelations* who it is that Rev. 3. 7. holds the Key of *David*: It is too hard for any Mortal to open the Door of this vast Palace. Humane Fancy may peep in, only to see it, might go far, rather than venture therein to lose it self. And if the adventurous Poet draw *Stanza's* of an extraordinary length (like a Body on the Wrack) the Coherence of the Parts is often loosen'd, distorted, or undiscerned; and the Musician discouraged from setting or composing such tedious Numbers into Anthems, since these are usually not long.

And if it be so, (as I have heard) that the *Hebrew* Meter through the Book of *Psalms* is generally very short, surely we are more obliged to conform to the Original, and measure our Feet (as near as may be) by that Model, or else by the Standard Measures of our Age, which have been allowed, known, and directed, even to the vulgar: Therefore as I have somewhat observed the manner of the *Jewish* Music in these *Psalms of Degrees*, (by frequent Repetitions and Responses) so I have confined my self, perhaps without too much straitness, to the Staffs, our ordinary Church Tunes do lean upon, that they may be made useful to many
by

The PREFACE

by the common Notes, as they may become grateful to others by their being capable of various better Compositions, (they being designed for Anthems and Hymns, as well as Psalms.)

Judg. 17. 5. Yet would I not have them humorously set up, nor sent
19. 29. forth strangely drest, like the *Mistress* of the *Levite*, or the
Prov. 31. *Idol* of the *young Man*; but modestly and gravely accounted like the *Mother* of *Solomon*, like our Church of *England*, that the Graces in these Spiritual Songs may be more charming, as more conspicuous, by being suited to the benefit and conversation of all, even of the lowest, as well as of the sublimer Capacities: Since by these I wish as general a good as is possible, without any undeserved Praise to my self, or any Detraction from another Person. For though I have pointed at two modern Men, as the *Herculean Pillars*, between whom I take my way; yet I have no great occasion to find fault with them, because the one stands on this side, and the other on that, of the Course I steer, whilst both serve to my safer Convoy into those *Streights* whither I am bound.

'Tis true, the kinds of Verse I make use of, are neither grateful nor fashionable (in this Licentious and *Dytherambique* Time); but they are the best known of any, and have no small interest in the common Approbation; and, as the old Maxim told me, *The more common the better*, of what is good: So the late excellent Bishop of *Chichester* (*Dr. H. King*) induced me, rather (by his Example) to redress and amend the Vulgar, than to deride their lame and feeble Sence; especially if (by the boldest attempts of Wit and Learning) we cannot come near the Majesty and Excellency of the first Pen-man, it is more reasonable that we should submit our Endeavours (as *Publicola* did his *Fasces*) to the use and benefit of the most and meanest, rather than make them Trophies of our own Arrogance, and our Brethren's weakness.

Mark 9. 49. Our continual work is, to have about us that *Salt* of *Charity*, which may *season* our Offerings both to God and Man, while we thank the one, or assist the other.
50.

Is it not double Superstition, and worse than Folly, to court the Prayers of Men in Heaven, and the Praises of Men on Earth? 'Tis enough to have an Interest quite otherwise in Religion, and to forward Man's Good with God's Glory, (more than with our own); or God's Blessing with our own good Deeds, rather than with others good Words.

So

to the READER.

So that I would not be thought Cenforious nor Singular, nor any other ways *Pharisaical* in my Entertainments here. Though I bring several Courses of Devotion, they are not worthy to be compared to the good piece of Flesh, and Flagon of Wine, wherewith our great Exemplar once treated the People; yet (let these be never such course Fare) they are really designed for a Blessing to all, as *David's Banquet* was, in *1 Chron. 16. 34.* and I can conclude with his Royal word, *As for me, in the uprightness of my Heart I have willingly offered* *1 Chron. 29: 17, 18.*
all these things.

Noli altum sapere, sed time.

Mort

More ERRATA's in the First Part.

PAg. 11. l. 34. *read off.* l. 42. *r. holiest.* p. 14. l. 3. *insert thou.* p. 15. l. 30. *insert is the wickedness of Folly, Eccles. 7. 25. l. 41. dele from.* p. 16. l. 2. *for from them, read for Women. In Margin Psal. 92. 13. l. 32. r. my.* p. 21. l. 14. *dele the.* l. 20. *r. were.* p. 25. l. 43. *r. they will.* p. 27. l. 19. *r. weep thus, dele this.* l. 34. *insert and thine, dele and.* p. 28. l. 28. *r. thee.* p. 32. *in Margin insert Dan. 4. 31-32. Jer. 51. 9. p. 38. l. 30. dele a. p. 40. l. 42. in Margin Deut. 32. 4. l. 45. dele the. p. 43. l. 32. insert for. p. 48. l. 12. in Margin 2 King. 6. 16, 23. to l. 46. in Margin Dan. 4. 12, 13. p. 50. l. 25. for secured, read soured. p. 53. l. 38. read we may be.*

E R R A T A in the Second Part.

PAg. 10. *in Gloria Patri, read To God, to Father, Son.* p. 21. l. 22. *insert are given us.* p. 24. l. 20. *dele as thou didst the Prophet, which is twice repeated.* p. 26. l. 14. *for O Lord, read O God. remove the * from l. 24. to l. 20.* p. 35. l. 16. *read establish his Kingdom.* p. 41. l. 32. *read and a fruitful.* p. 45. l. 16. *in Margin Isa. 36. 10. p. 48. l. 2. in Margin Ruth 2. 4. p. 49. l. 17. read the Rods. l. 33. read preserved it. p. 50. l. 4. read thou. p. 55. l. 32. read Jewish. l. 33. in Margin Jer. 38. 12, 13. p. 56. l. 2. in Margin Jonas 2. 5, 6. l. 17. read this present state. p. 60. l. 6. for Loving, read Leaving the Breast. p. 61. l. 6. read Root. p. 62. l. 3. read Uzzah. l. 23. read Rereward. p. 64. in Margin, read Clarius. in l. 23. read sedem innuit Aris. p. 68. in Marg. † read nictaturus sim. p. 79. l. 13. read but to the people who watched there. p. 84. l. 17. read Songs of Elevation. And note: This whole 84th Page should have been the first.*



THE FIRST
Pfalm of Degrees,
 BEING
 The C X X. P S A L M.

It is a Complaint, and Prayer against the falseness, fraud, and impious Designs, rather than the force, of inhumane Adversaries: Because their Strength and Power may (at least for a Time) be from God's Will and Permission; but Deceit and Perfidiousness owe their Birth to Men's Prevarications, and the subtil Temptations of the Evil One: And therefore ought the rather to be deprecated.

*The Author of this Psalm is not known, but supposed to be David, and made by him upon the like occasion that the 7th, the 34th, and the 52^d were Composed, when he fled to Gath, ob Æthiopem Jeminiensem, (as * Castalio phraseth it) or upon the implacable * In Psal. 7. Fury of Saul; truly and civilly, as well as elegantly stiled, A melancholy terrible Man: Or else upon the malicious Information of a Cushite or Edomite against an Israelite indeed, in whom there was no guile; which seems very probable from his Description of the Parties, who were after the way of Melech (as the Æthiopians Cushites were) and allied to the sordid Tents of Kedar, or Arabia; of which Country Doeg was a Native.*

*This Psalm likewise looks Prophetically at the sworn Enemies of Jerusalem's Peace; such as were the confederate Arabians and Asiatics at the building the Temple, and afterwards with Antiochus, at the defacing of the same: All which cruel and cunning Foes are expressed by * Gog and Magog.*

* Ezek. 38. 2.

Ὁδὸν τῶν ἀναβιβῶν, &c.

For S. Steven's
day, or some
time of Trial.



IN my distress and fear, I



with did word; From Lips, made foul by guile and wrongs, and



from false Tongues, Lord save my Soul.



*Quid tibi da-
bit? aut quid
addet tibi?*
Spoken as to
Saul (perhaps)
by the Psal-
mist, upon the
account of
Doeg,

What Praise? what Profit shall
The treacherous Tongue bring thee?
Poor Soul! 'twill scorch and Gall
Thy self, as well as me.

Having been 'Twill doubly harm,
frightened in By Fire; and Shot

Like Darts made hot
From some strong Arm.

desire to observe in Prose the rare Elegancy of the Psalmist here; who speaking of a desert state and place among the Sons of *Israel*, (the great Archer) he tells his savage Foes, (though Companions) that they shall be struck with their own Weapons, as *Saul* was; and burnt with the Coals of the Wilderness, where Juniper most abounds, which was the most desolate and grievous Fire, from the nature of the Wood; and so proper fuel for the black Tents of *Kedar*, and for *Mesech*; (the *Assatics*) if taken for a People wild, and wandering about in Wagons, or living in Tents covered with Skins: But if it refers to a place, it is well rendered by the LXXII. whom I follow, with *Symachus* and *Aquila*, &c,

Why

Why then? O why so long
Do I protract my Woes?
By wand'ring still among
War's Friends, and Peace's Foes:

**I'm in a Tent
Who are on Theft;**

Of *Arabs* left,
And Murder bent.

At me their Bows are bent,
Their Malice doth encrease;
They say no good I meant,
When I did seek their Peace:

When I speak fair,
And straight the Swarm

I them all-arm,
Their Stings prepare.

Corollarium Ἀμοιβῶν :

Which may be used, or omitted;

It being another { Repetition
Return
Recollection } of the { Sense
Musick
Psalms. }

BUT though the Sland'ers sting,
Like Lightning, pierc'd and burn'd:
The Stones which he did fling;
Heav'n in his Face return'd.

Ver. 3, 4.

Live Coals from Hell,
By his bad Tongue,

And Javelings flung
On his Head fell.

Therefore no more will I
Be of such Bruits afraid ;
No more I'll sigh, or cry,
Though I'm in Deserts stay'd :

Ver. 2, 7.

Уст. 5, 6.

In all my Ways
Who doſt afford

I'll Bless Thee, Lord,
Such cause of Praise.

Ver. 1, 2v

Though I'm in Deserts stay'd,
 No more I'll sigh, or cry:
 Or be of Bruits afraid,
 No longer now will I:

Such cause of Praise
 We'll Bless Thee, Lord,

Thou dost afford;
 In all our Ways.

Gloria Patri, &c.

Glory be to our King,
 Who shall be, was, and is;
 Loud Hallelujahs sing
 To God, the God of Peace:

The Lord of Hosts,
 The Father, Son,

The Three in One,
 And Holy Ghost.

AMEN.

CON.

CONTEMPLATIONS and COLLECTS

ON THE

First PSALM of DEGREES;

BEING

The CXX. PSALM.

O Lord, our Redeemer! a very present help in trouble, as I have found thee heretofore, blessed be thy powerful Compassion, so I desire to approve thee whensoever, as at this time, I cry unto thee to deliver my Soul. O God! I see that I am fallen into a dangerous Condition, by the Lies of the Serpent, the Treacheries of my own Flesh; and the Fallhoods of the World, which I have sought and served; listened and trusted to, and so am justly appay'd with Cousenage and Disgrace, with Calumnies and Accusation. For what can be had from the Accuser of the Brethren, from the deceitfulness of Riches; and from the Cheats of all things here below, but disappointments, and vexation for such as follow lying Vanities, forsaking thy Mercies, and their own?

Alas! then woe is me! that I have heaped up such Coals of Vengeance on my own Head, and pierced my Heart through with so many Darts of Sorrow, by not delighting in the Tents of the Righteous, nor in the Tabernacles of thy Holiness, but in the Dwellings of Ungodliness, and in the House of the Accursed; so that I have deserved indeed to be made a Vagabond like *Cain*, and a Slave like *Cham*, in a perpetual Banishment from Comfort, and in a Captivity unto Sin, by having my Conversation according to the evil fashion of this Age.

But, Lord! how long, how long shall I sojourn, either amongst the Enemies of thy Grace, or of my Peace? Amongst the Superstitious or Idolatrous? Amongst those who are after the way of *Mesech*? Or those who dwell in the black aboads of *Kedar*? O! prolong not my Danger and Unhappiness any more among them; nor protract my Wandrings with a backsliding People; for I seek Peace, Peace with Thee, with my own Conscience; and with all the World.

But *can the Egyptian change his Skin? Had Zimri Peace, who slew his Master?* No Lord. *There is no Peace* (thou hast said it) *to the Wicked*, who are at defiance with thee, and with themselves, and make War in the face of Heaven.

Therefore that I may find Peace, I seek thy Pardon, and my Soul's Purity, and desire thee to preserve me from the Pollutions and Snares of a perverse Generation; that dissemble as strange Children, that so (having no fellowship with the workers of Iniquity) I might live in the sweet Communion of thy Saints, and to be furthered by their Examples and Conversation in the way of Peace and Holiness.

For, Lord! I would be a pacifick *Jacob*, and dwell under the shadow of thy Wings, there accounting my self secure though I have no other

C

Cove-

Covering. Thou art the best place to hide me in, and 'tis not my Sword or Bow shall settle or secure me, but thy Mercy, thy Grace, and thy Spirit. No strange Arms here can give me a certain or safe Abode, unless thou be on my side.

Therefore, dear God! whilst many rise up against me to trouble me, in saying, *Where is thy God?* (seeking to destroy me with their own quiet) be thou a God nigh at hand to deliver me from Treachery, Malice, Turbulence, and Hypocrisie. And while my Foes heap Coals of Fire on their own Heads by unjust Actions, and hard Speeches; let my Mouth be touched with a Coal from thine Altar; that I may know how to keep the Door of my Lips from all Cursing and Bitterness, Lying and Blasphemies, fraudulent and filthy Communication; and how to open it in Praying to thee, that I may find the Blessings of Peace within, above, abroad, about me, by Repentance of my Sins, Reformation of my Life, Regeneration of my Nature, and Reconciliation to thy Love.

O! let it suffice that I have stayed so long in their Habitations, where the Instruments of Cruelty remain, where I might have been drawn either unto base Earthly Sorrow and Distraction, or to foul Hellish Guilt and Desperation, and so to inevitable Destruction both of Soul and Body. Let it pity thee to see my poor Soul in such a Sink, such a Gaol and Mill, in such a nasty, vile, and slavish State as it hath endured. And do thou cover my Head while my Foes make them ready to Battel. Then shall I be guarded from the strife of Tongues, from the contradiction of Sinners, from the reproach that I fear, and from Satan that is come forth against me with great wrath, because I have called on thy Name; while thou art not angry that I cry unto thee,

Our Father, &c.

THE

THE SECOND

Psalm of Degrees,

BEING

The CXXI. PSALM,

*Is an Act of Acquiescence and Trust in God's Power and Presence, made by David (as it is thought) when hunted like a Partridge on the Mountains; and pursued by Saul, when he made the 54th, 55th, and 57th Psalm: And this, being much used by the Jews in Babylon, (as most suitable for times of Persecution or Sickness) was at their going up from thence appointed to be one of their Psalms of Ascents, and therefore to be sung frequently, loudly, and by Responses; which occasioned this Composing it like an Anthem, *Ὡς Ἀντίφωνα ἀλλοιωθησομένη*: The Stanza's being so pointed and divided as to answer alternately by Disticks (if it may better suit the Musick.)*

The Title of it hath a difference from the rest, (as the Rabbins observe) being *מלחמה* and not as in others *מלחמה*:

It may be stiled David's March, made by him (or some other considerable Person) while he kept the Field, either for the safety of his Flocks (as Jacob did), or of his Friends (as Abram): Thus did the Royal Shepherd, and sweet Singer of Israel exercise, and employ his Mind in the grateful Memory of the Divine Goodness. Well might he then here pray and hope like a Souldier, that God would be his Shade (as well as his Shield) as near to him as his shadow; that the Sun might not hurt him by Day, nor the Moon by Night, (as Absalom, and Achitophel, the one by Day, and the other by Night, intended to have done.)

And if we look on David, as he went up the Ascent of Mount Olivet: This Psalm was very proper for his Condition then, as it is for any Person's now, in the interval of War; the Phrases being throughout the whole Psalm Military, and allusive to Souldiers besieged, as in the first Verse; relieved, as in the second; all-arm'd, as in the third; secured, watched, and guarded, as in the fourth; shielded and surrounded, as in the fifth and sixth; in the seventh and eighth hemm'd in, and convoy'd out for Victory and Triumph.

For the Second of September and October.



Here shall I seek for aid? where shall I



set mine Eyes? mine Eyes and Pray'rs, like Birds afraid,



up to the Hills would rise. But whither would they



rise? un—to some dangerous height? O no, this



Quarry thither flies, whence springs our help, and fight.



Nor

Nor hath our Health and Light
From things below their Birth:
But from the highest Rock of Might,
Who made both Heav'n and Earth.

Therefore, though false foul Earth
Thy Soul with Foes surround:
Shall it be mov'd from holy Mirth?
Shall Cares run it on Ground?

Christ is the Ark to ground
Thy Heart on, when distressed:
From head to foot he'll make thee found;
On him did *Jacob* rest.

Gen. 8. 11.

But he doth never rest
From doing good, nor sleeps:
That with such Guards thou may'st be blest, *Gen. 32. 2.*
As he his *Israel* keeps.

Gen. 28. 11.

Good Shepherd he doth keep
His Flock, ev'n in ~~Death's~~ shade:
See then (if thou art of his Sheep)
How on thy side he's laid.

*Non dormi-
bit, multo minus
dormiet, nat
et an-
quamvis xpi
sitas, & ex
impatiensia lu-
gentis Deus ob-
dormire dicitur.
Psal. 44. 24.*

Psal. 22. 1, 4.

Though Dangers have way-laid
Thy going out, or in:
See how thy Husband's Arm's display'd,
To save thy very Skin.

Jsa. 54. 5.

Like the three Children's Skin,
Thine shall be scorched by none:
Whatever Heat thou may'st be in,
Whatever Star hath shown.

Dan. 3. 27.

Nor shall the Moon, nor Sun
Hurt thee, by Night or Day:
No Mischief seen, nor closely done,
Shall touch thee any way.

God shall preserve thy Ways
And Mind, from all that's ill
In Youth: And when thy Life decays,
Blessed thou shalt be still.

Then trust and bless him still,
Who endless Safety sends:
God through this Vale of Sorrows, will
Guide us to joyful ends.

The Entrance, Progress, Ends,
Public and private Pow'rs;
Labours, and Studies of his Friends,
God blesses at all hours.

Then trust and bless him still,
Who still did us defend:
God doth, and ever will,
Give Blessings without end: } } Give Blessings without end,
God doth and ever will;
He still did us defend,
Then trust and bless him still.

Antistrophe.

The Entrance, Progress, Ends,
Public and private Pow'rs:
And Works of all his Friends,
God blesses: Lord bless Ours.

Gloria Patri, &c.

To God, ~~the~~ Father, ~~and~~ Son,
And to the Holy-Ghost,
Be Glory: And let ev'ry one
Strive who shall praise God most.

CON-

CONTEMPLATIONS and COLLECTS

ON THE

Second PSALM of DEGREES,

BEING

The CXXI. PSALM.

I Will lift up my Heart to thee, O Lord ! And though it be cast down with the dangers and diffidence I am in, while mine Afflictions and mine Enemies have cast a Mount about me, to hinder me from the sight and hope of Succour, yet have I God's Hill to fly unto ; and from thy House I can survey the end of the Wicked, the Redemption of thy Captives, and the height of thy Power, that is higher than the highest. But O the depth of thy Love ! What a pleasant Vale is this under it ? How doth this smile and sing, and stand full of Corn, that strengthens Man's Heart ? So that *although I remain in the Valley of the shadow of Death*, if I can but look up to the Rock that is higher than I, to Christ (the *Shecinah*) the true *Mercy Seat*, that is placed above the *Cherubims*, all Types and Symbols of his Presence, I shall neither lose my Faith, nor my Life ; I shall not be discomfited, nor enslaved like a surprized *Zedekiah*, I shall not be famished, nor broken up like a long besieged *Jerusalem*. Though mine Enemies hem me in on every side, and carnal Fear cause me to cry out (as the Prophet's Servant) *What shall we do ?* Yet if I can but lift up mine Eyes to thee, which indeed are naturally as heavy as *Moses* his Hand, I shall perceive somewhat else besides Perils and Foes on every side, I shall find the Mountains full of Chariots of Fire, and more for me than can be against me. For an Host of Angels shall pitch their Tents about me to secure me, and those mighty Ministers of thy good pleasure shall keep me like *Daniel* from the power of the Lyon. So that my most Savage Enemies shall lack and suffer hunger, while I want nothing that is good. For though my way be hedged up that I cannot pass which way I would, nor follow the Lusts of my Heart, and the desires of mine Eyes, as many do, yet I may look up with joy and confidence (as I trust I shall) at the last day, because my Salvation is drawing nigh.

My Hope, my Help, cometh from the Lord, not from the Angels in his Presence, but from the Angel of his Presence, and of his Covenant, the Blessed *JESUS*, who having taken our Nature that he might be sensible of our Infirmities, ever abides with Humanity, at thy right Hand making Intercession for us. And as he made the Heavens and the Earth for us, so he makes a new Heaven and a new Earth of us, by justifying and sanctifying both our Souls and Bodies, through the mighty Work of his Spirit, in his Word and Sacraments : For these are the Mountains of the Lord, wherein he is apparently seen, Glorious in Holiness, Fearful in Praises, doing Wonders, and abounding in Goodness and Truth. If we Worship him (as our Fathers did) in these

Moun-

Mountains, in the heights of Sincerity and Devotion, we may expect to hear God promising us graciously, as he did *Abraham*, that he will be a God to us, and to our Seed after us: And we may hope to see him, as *Manoah* and his Wife did, in the Zealous performances of his holy Worship, in the Flame arising from the Altar of our Hearts; from whence God would not accept a Service, if he desired the Death of Sinners.

Therefore we may be assured, that if we keep in his ways he will keep us in ours, as he did his *Israel*, both by the Pillar of Fire, and by the Pillar of a Cloud; by the flame of Affliction, as well as by the light of Prosperity. And while we lay hold on these, (as *Sampson* did on the two Columns) let us invoke thy help, O Lord; saying,

O Lord! Though thou mayest call to Baldness, to Weeping, to Weakness, or to Want; though thou mayest touch the Sinew, and make it shrink; or strive with me as thou didst with *Israel*, and begin to afflict me, or seem to depart from me, so that my Flesh and my Heart may fail, yet O suffer not my Soul to slip, let not my Foot my Foundation be removed, but let it rest with thy *Dove* upon the *Ark of thy Covenant*, and be fixed on the Rock *Christ Jesus*, that thou mayest order all my goings.

O! do thou go out and in before me, that my going out and coming in may be ever blessed. If thou go not out with us, carry us not abroad, nor let us stay at home without thee. Let not the Vanities of the Day, nor the Visions of the Night, disturb our Senses, or abuse our Souls. O Lord, prevent the Mid-day Devils, and the Arrows that fly by Noon, from blasting or hurting of us; nor let Nocturnal Evils, or any mischief in the dark, have Power to smite us: But be thou a Succour, a Second, a God, not a far off, to preserve and prosper us in all our Actions, publick and private, in our Labours, in our Studies, in our Rest, in our Retirements, in our weak Beginnings, in our happier Progresses, and in our best Conclusions. O Lord, be with us in our entrance on the Stage of this World, in our Parts here, in our Exit hence, even now and for evermore. *Amen.*

THE THIRD

Pfalm of Degrees,

BEING

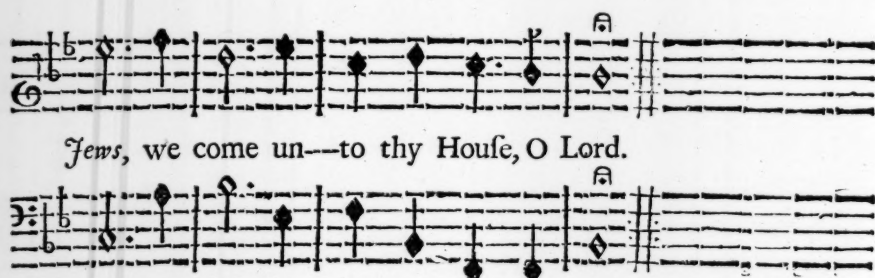
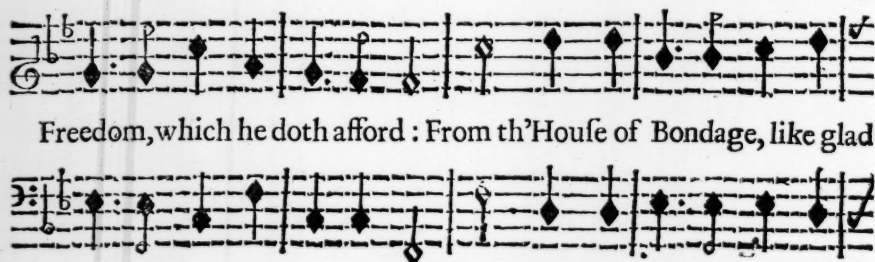
The CXXII. PSALM,

Describeth David's Joy, which is expressed in the 30th Psalm, at the bringing of the Ark, and Offering for the Temple, and Dedication of his House to God's Service: And it is a Preparative Hymn for the Devout, in their going up to the Places of Religion and Solemn Worship; containing their Thanks, Praise, and Pleasure, in the return of the Comfort and Company, which they enjoyed in the public Adoration of God; and their Prayers for the longer continuance of such signal Blessings: Made by David (as it is thought) upon his return to Jerusalem, after his flight from Absalom; and solemnly sung by the Levites at their coming out of Captivity. Jerusalem in general (as the Temple more especially) being the Type of God's Church, both Militant and Triumphant, that is built with the precious Stones of the Apostles and Prophets, CHRIST himself being the Rock, Caput Anguli, & Caput Angelorum; to whom when many come, there is much Joy.

The Poem is Dramatick, (like the 118th Psalm) in which the King, Priest, and People, seem to bear their Parts of Rejoycing at the public Festivals (which were thrice every Year to be solemnized at Jerusalem) according to the Command of God; which occasioned the great Beautifying, Enlarging, and Fortifying of that City, intimated in the 2^d, 3^d, 6th, and 7th Verses; as well as the other reason of its Happiness and Amplitude, (from the Temple of God, and Throne of David) mentioned in the 1st, 5th, 8th, and 9th Verses: To which may be added this reason, because there was the great Senate of the LXXII. or Sanhedrim.

The King beginneth the Psalm in the 1st Verse, the Priests follow in the 2^d, the People in the 3^d, and they go on in the 4th. Then the King takes it again in the 5th, the Priests in the 6th, and the People go on in the 7th (as in a Procession, and good order): The Priests take it again in the 8th, and the King concludes in the best, (though last place) with a fixt and pious Resolution.

This may properly be set for the 29th of May.



Our Woes and Wand'rings now shall cease,
While rooted fast, like Trees, we stand
Within thy Courts; who doſt with Peace
Plant us again in our own Land.

Our Joys ſhoot up with freſh encrease,
While rooted faſt, like Trees, we ſtand
Within thy Courts; who doſt with Peace
Plant us again in our own Land.

See, ſee, how comely ! how compact !
Peace makes this Gyant-City ſeem :
Our Union makes her Form exact,
Like th'Heav'nly New Jeruſalem.

Whither, to an Eternal Feaſt
All the Lord's Tribes at laſt ſhall go;
And on his Hill above find reſt,
As we do in his Houſe below.

Here now, (as at a Paſſover)
Our Tribes (like Streams) i' th' Ocean meet;
To ſerve thee, as thy Laws averr:
And Praise thy Name, that is ſo great.

*Hieruſolyma
optime inſtituta
concorſ, & ideo
duratura.*

Here

Here now, (as at a Passover)
Our Tribes (like Streams) i'th' Ocean meet;
To serve thee, as thy Statutes are:
And Praise thy Name, that is so great.

Here is God's Temple, *David's* Throne,
The Bench of Justice, Mercy's Seat:
Here Princes, Prophets, Priests make known
How good our Church! our State how great!

Here's the Blest Type of Heav'n above,
Pray then for *Salem*; here for Peace:
Since they who love this Place, do prove
Happy, and blest with much Encrease.

Lord, bless us, and this Place, with Peace,
With Plenty, and with Piety:
For thy Name's sake, let our's encrease,
Our King's, and Friends Prosperity.

All Tyes, both Humane, and Divine;
Our Love for Men, our Zeal for God,
What we can do, or wish, combine
To seek the Bliss of this abroad.

Gloria Patri, &c.

*In the Lord's Praise let none be Dumb;
But Father, Son, and Ghost adore;
Who was, and is, and is to come,
Thrice Blessed God for evermore.*

*Fiat Pax in An-
temurali tuo, &
Abundantia, &
muggeant
ora. in Palatin,
Turriam ad in-
star struisti.*

CONTEMPLATIONS and COLLECTS

ON THE

Third PSALM of DEGREES,

BEING

The CXXII. PSALM.

O Glorious God! to whom Praise and Worship is due, to whom Vengeance and Holiness belongs; accept the Joys, and Adorations of our Souls and Bodies, for that we have not only Freedom in our own Persons, but also Encouragement from our Relations to come along with them, and many more of thy People, to the most proper place, and by the appointed way, of public Worshipping and Praising of thee.

E 2

Oh!

Oh! how glad (as if we had found great Spoils) may we be to find, not only that we can, but also that others will plant themselves within thy Courts, and not stand in the way of Sinners, that we may prosper together like Trees by the Water side, and bring forth Fruit, and that in due season?

Dear, and gracious Lord! when we go hence, and shall be called away by Death, how happy should we be, could we come to thee as easily as we now can come to the Church, and bring this *Olive-branch* in our Mouths into thy Ark!

Let us go up into the House of the Lord, let us ascend unto his holy Hill; let us be transplanted from the Gates of Death, to be rooted in the Porches of the *New Jerusalem*; for one day in thy Courts is better than a thousand in any other. *I had rather be a Door-keeper in thy Tabernacle, than to dwell in the Tents of Wickedness.*

Help us then to joyn with the blessed Choir, both of the Church Militant and Triumphant, in a Lesson of the best Service, even Love and Charity, which is the compleatest Religion, the fulfiller of the Law, the filler full of Heaven.

For see the *Jerusalem* that comes down thence, as well as that which is above, agrees in all its Parts and Graces, and by its lovely Symmetry makes up the sweetest Harmony of Heaven and Earth, declaring Charity the bond of Peace, as Peace the breeder of Felicity.

Therefore while we see the present Concord and Conformity thou hast afforded our Nation, we look with joy upon an Emblem of that glorious Day, when thou shalt gather thy Children from the four Winds, and bring them together in the Clouds, to meet the Lord in the Air, and to live with him for ever.

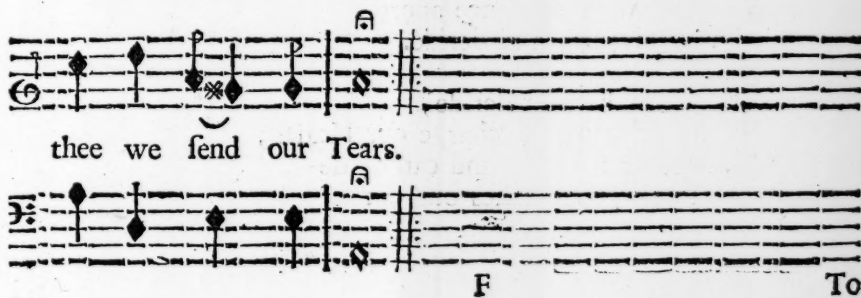
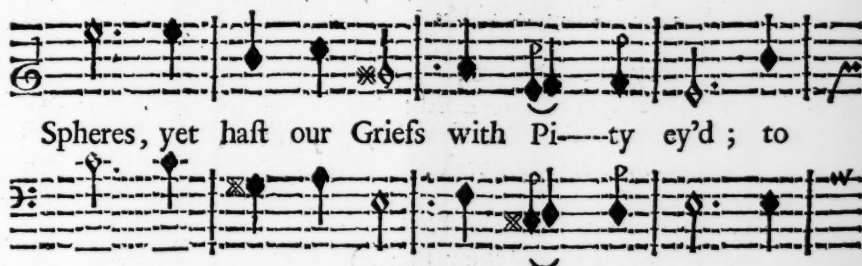
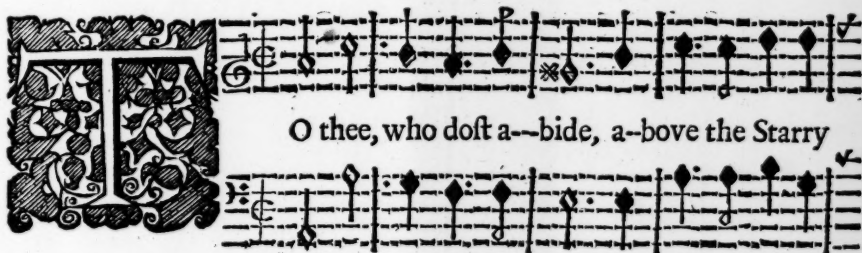
Lord! 'till that time come, preserve thy Church among us from Rent and Spot, from Breach and Blemish, and meet with us graciously (as thou didst with *Elijah*) in the soft mild Voice of thy Gospel, in the savoury Breath of thy Spirit, in the sweet Airs of our pious and public Services; wherein make us to consent to Pray for the Peace of our Souls, and of thy People; as also for the Plenty of our Land, for the Piety of our Governours, for the Prosperity of their Government and Persons; for the Purity of Religion, for the Perpetuity of thy Church among us; as also for Unanimity, and Uniformity in the way of thy Worship, that we may endeavour, as well as desire, the most durable Good here, and an eternal Good hereafter, to our selves, and ours, and all thine.

Which we beseech thee grant for Jesus Christ's sake, who is of the Stock and Lineage of David, to whom belongs the Seat of Judgment for ever and ever. Amen.

THE FOURTH
Pfalm of Degrees,
 BEING
 The CXXIII. PSALM,

Is agreeable to the condition of David in the third Psalm; as also to the sad State of the Israelites: Compos'd (perhaps) by Ezra at Babylon, and from that time frequent in use; being Calculated for the Times of Trouble and Tyranny. Wherein the Church (as under Antiochus, or some such insulting Oppressor) prayeth, complaineth, and trusts to God.

The Priest beginning (as it were with an Oremus) to the People in the first Verse; and then the whole Congregation joyning and going on with him to the end of the Psalm.



Psal. 121. 1.

By Hand in the Text is understood help, strength, or protection; by those who take the words of this Verse to imply the servant's repairing to his Lord for succour and defence from Foreign injuries. It also signifies bounty, direction, and correction, to those who take the meaning as I apprehend it.

Gen. 21. 14.

Jon. 1. 3.

Jon. 4. 8.

2 King. 5. 2.

Multum saturata est Anima
subannatione:
As if play'd
upon, and scoffed at, by the
Soldiery,
while led in
Triumph; according to the
expression in
Psal. 137. 3.

To Heav'n this Spring of Tears
From hence doth bubbling rise;
Which from low Grounds our Passion rears
To thee, that hast our Eyes.

Nor do we need an Eye,
But to observe thy Hands:
Which way for Blessing us they lye;
By Chast'nings, or Commands.

Since oft, like *Israel's* Hands,
Thine, as a-crofs, are spread;
For God (not Man) best understands
How to Crown *Ephraim's* Head.

Gen. 48. 14, 19.

Therefore we raise our Heads,
Not to repine, but pray;
To mark how our chief *Joshua* leads,
And how we him obey.

As Soldiers still obey
Their Leader's Staff, and Rod,
And at their Becks do go or stay;
So wait we on our God.

Thy Smile or Frowns, O God,
Like humblest Handmaids, we
Do bear; and from our Lord's abroad
Do not (like *Hagar*) flee.

No *Jonas* here will fly
From thee; (though Chasten'd) thus
We, as meek Servants, carefully
Stay, 'till thou pity us.

Thy Mercy we implore,
Thy speedy Mercy, Lord:
For now our Lives are scorn'd; nay more,
Our very Souls abhorr'd.

By those we are abhorr'd,
(As we do loath their Pride)
Who can with Insolence afford
To wrong us, and deride.

But God shall them deride,
Whose Scorns o're-charge our Hearts;
When these are full, and can abide
No more, God takes our parts.

And

And since God takes our parts,
To him our Tears shall glide:
To him we'll lift our Looks and Hearts,
Who doth in Heav'n abide.

Now since God takes our part,
To him our Tears shall glide:
To him we'll lift our Looks and Hearts,
Who doth in Heav'n abide.

Gloria Patri, &c.

*All Glory, Praise, and Bliss,
To th' Three, in Unity;
Who (as at first) was God, now is,
And evermore shall be.*

CONTEMPLATIONS and COLLECTS
ON THE
Fourth PSALM of DEGREES,
BEING
The CXXIII. PSALM.

O Thou great Lord and King, that dwellest in the Heavens!
David hath taught me to lift up mine Eyes to thee, and
the Son of *David* hath better instructed me to call thee
by thy Spirit, *Abba, Father which art in Heaven, Hallowed*
be thy Name, &c.

That gracious Name of *Our Father*, invites us, Lord, to call upon
thee *in the needful time of Trouble*. For though thou dwellest in the
highest Heavens, thou art not contained by them; but from that thy
Throne, vouchsafest to look down upon what is done and suffered upon
Earth. So that in the deepest evils of our Sufferance, as in all the
good of our Enjoyment here, we may still look up, and see thy
doing, and be satisfied in the Wonder that thou dost so much for our
advantage.

Ah! how marvellous is it in our Eyes, that when Hope and Help
both fail on Earth, we can seek much higher for them, and even then
too, when we are justly corrected; because thou art a merciful King,
and behold we are thy Servants for all that thou hast afforded us.

We submit to thee with humble Fear, and wait on thee with Thank-
giving, and Praise thee for smiting and subduing us thy People under
thee.

thee. For thou dost as the King of *Israel* did to *Benhadad*; thou beatest, that thou mayest bring us to thy self; thou conquereſt, that thou mayest be kind; taking away a little, that thou mightest give a better Kingdom. Wherefore we beg, and trust, that when thou hast convinced us how worthy we all are of Hate, Death, and Disgrace, that then thou wilt restore us to Life, Favour, and Prosperity.

Well may we be watchful Suppliants and Expectants for some Token of thy Pity, when thy left Hand, some sinister Providence is laid upon us, because thou hast still thy right Hand, the Man of thy right Hand to embrace thy Spouse, when thy afflicting Hand is never so heavy upon her, either by the Tyranny of Oppressors, or by the Rod of Tribulation.

Let us rightly hearken to this Rod, and see the Hand which hath appointed it, and not look awry by Pride, Uncharitableness, Impenitence, or Impatience, on what thou dost; because as thy provoked Justice is the Author, so our Provocations are the just Original of our Sorrows, and the Springs of our Sufferings. And it is well for us in our Calamities when we are not thrown out, but fall into the Hands of God, who is no less pitiful, than powerful, to deliver us with *David* out of the Hands of all our Enemies, and out of the Hands of *Saul* too: From all our wicked Foes, (I mean) and from our most wicked selves also; from our own Unrighteousness, as well as others, which fills our Souls with Shame, our State with Contempt, and our Lives with Sorrow.

For is not proud *Lucifer*, as it were, at ease, when we tumble our selves down by diffidence in God, or self-deceit? And vile Oppressors, like the Devils themselves, are in their proper and pleasant work, when they are *Lording it over thine Heritage*.

Wherefore preserve us, we beseech thee, from our own Baseness and Falseness, as well as from the Tyranny and Treachery of thine other Enemies. And plead thou our Cause for us with others, and with our selves, for thy Son's, and for our Soul's sake.

And when we are driven by the Insolence of others, or by the Demerits of our own Actings, to implore thy Mercy, and thy Pity, with all the prostitute Submission, humble Confidence, and absolute Resignation of Obedient Servants. O! let us not be slothful in our Duties, or doubtful of thy Providence, but diligent in all the Labour that thou callest us to, thanking our selves for deserving Correction, as thee our Lord for correcting us so Father-like, and trusting by thy Chastisements to prove in us more of thy Love, and of our Adoption.

THE FIFTH Psalm of Degrees,

BEING

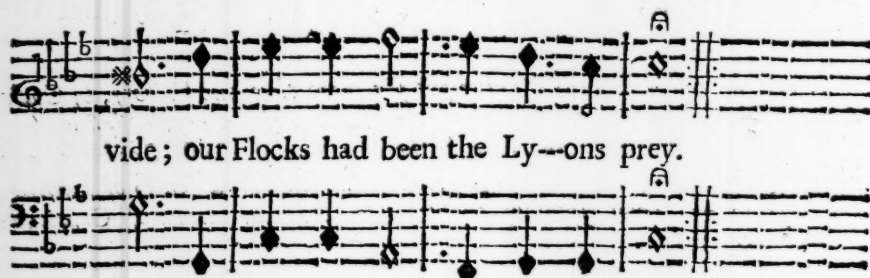
The CXXIV. PSALM,

Is entituled David's, according to the Tenor of that in Samuel, being Cap. 2. v. 22. a Commemoration of his wonderful deliverance from great and many Dangers; together with a thankful acknowledgment to God, the sole Author of Safety and Success, properly used at any time of eminent Preservation; (as on the Fifth of November, or Third of June.)

It may be called, David's Triumphs for more than one Victory, by God's special assistance, as may be gathered from the repetition of the first words, (nisi quod Dominus) which imply the iteration of God's Goodness, and Man's gratitude; for when he is pleased to manifest the largeness of Loving-kindness to us, then especially ought we to make our return of Gratitude with a Non nobis.

This Divine Io Pæan was composed (probably) after the Conquest of the Ammonites, who had beset David on every side, according to that expression of their force and inhumane Rage, Tunc homines (Adham per contemptum) vivos deglutiissent nos; or (as the word Adham seems to hint to me) upon his subduing of the Edomites, when he made the 60th Psalm; or (as others think) after most of his Victories over the Philistines, &c. in Chron. when the Snare was broke by the Death of his Enemies, as (in the Prophecy) the Jews Bondage was, by the Persians breaking the Chaldean Monarchy.

And so the late and former, the many and wonderful Deliverances of our Nation, ^{given us} are to own the immediate effect of God's gracious interposition; and as a signall Evidence of His all-swaying Power, (as the first Creation of the World was) that we might not Sacrifice to our Nets and Bulwarks, nor value our selves upon the store of deeper Waters (like once Proud, but now Desolate, Tyre;) but that our Trust; Succour, and Defence, may be founded on him, the Supreme of all Beings, on whom depends the whole Creation.



Had not the Lord been on our side,
When Men against us rose (like Waves);
The Surges of their Rage, and Pride,
Had snatcht us quick into our Graves.

Jonas.

Numb. 16. 29.

Like Whales upon *Amitay's* Son,
Death's Jaws on us they open'd wide:
Dathan's strange End, how could we shun?
Had not the Lord been on our side.

When Seas of Rage swell'd to that height,
As on our Souls to whelm their Tyde;
Those Torrents had destroy'd us quite,
Had not the Lord been on our side!

Then had the Streams our strength o're-pow'r'd,
But we through Floods, through Foes did wade:
And were not, as a Prey, devour'd;
Nor of their curst Teeth afraid.

Blessed

Blessed be God! our Life's got free
 From all the Toyls, their Mischief set:
 As Birds out of a Snare, so we
 'Scape strangely through the Fowler's Net.

Hell Snares are broke, our Souls are freed,
 For on God's help our Hearts are stay'd:
 God's Word speaks Heav'n, and Earth his Deed;
 His Hands preserve the Works they made.

God keep us all, as all he made;
 From him the Heavens and Earth proceed:
 Upon his Truth our Trust is stay'd;
 Hell's Snares are broke, and we are freed.

Gloria Patri, &c.

*Glory be to the Father, Son,
 And Holy-Ghost, whom we adore
 In Persons three, in Essence one,
 Who was, is, shall be evermore.*

CONTEMPLATIONS and COLLECTS
 ON THE
 Fifth PSALM of DEGREES,
 BEING
 The CXXIV. PSALM.

O Thou Lyon of the Tribe of *Judah*, thou Shepherd of *Israel*, that ledest thy People like a Flock, while we with thankfulness look up to thy strength for us, to thy stay of us, and thy staff over us, let us look down with Humility on our own unworthiness. We deserve not the least part of that care and watchfulness of thine, which defends us daily from the ravenous *Beast* of this World's Temptations, from the *Uncircumcised Philistine* our own Flesh, and from the roaring *Lyon* of the Abyſs, that goes about seeking to devour, to swallow us up quick, as it were, at a Morſel: And yet, blessed be the Lord, he hath not given us up for a Prey to these Destroyers; and if we give not up our selves by our sinful fears, and easie submissions, though *Satan's* rage be like his Hell enflamed, he cannot have his will of us. That *Lyon* may come out against us with great wrath, and fright us by his vain Noises, but cannot fall

upon us at once, as he desires. He hath no part, no power of us, 'till we give it to him.

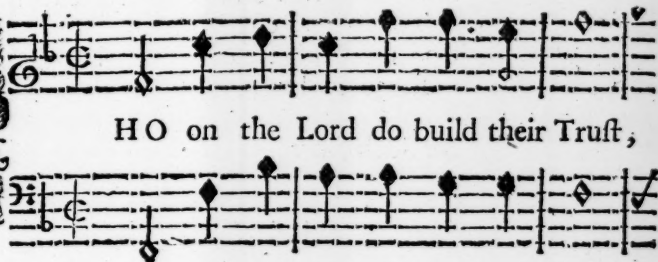
If therefore, O Lord, we are on thy side, or thou on ours, we need not fear what Devils, or what Man can do unto us, even when they rise never so proudly, never so powerfully against us. Let us but set the Lord our Righteousness at our right hands; let us but have righteous Hands, and innocent Hearts, and we shall not be so greatly moved or terrified, as to let the Enemy triumph over our Souls; though yet we must confess with Grief, that many Waters have gone over them. The swelling Torrents of sinful Passions and Prosperity, the mighty Floods of worldly Cares and Vanities, the superfluities of naughty sensual Pleasures, have not only tossed and endangered, but even overwhelmed and swallowed up our Lives. So that we have been sinking into destruction, like those that are howling in the Pit.

Alas! the bitter Streams of our vile imaginations and transgressions, have, like a deadly draught or Poyson, been suck'd in greedily, and sent to our very Hearts; so that we had been past all means of escape, or hope of succour, if thou hadst not stood by us, as thou didst by thy Servant *Paul*, and not only strengthened, but saved us, as thou didst the Prophet, by drawing us forth ~~as thou didst the Prophet~~ of the dangerous Gulph of estrangement and infidelity, into which our triple Enemies would have thrown us. Their Power would be great, like their Malice: Didst not thou take our part, O holy Spirit! and plead our Cause. O sweetest *Jesus*! Blessed be thy omnipotent, and most glorious Mercy, that hath made our Souls as a Bird that may fly up to Heaven and be secure. We praise, and thank thee, dearest Father! for those Wings of Faith, Prayer, Love, and Devotion, whereby we can escape the Snare of the cunning Fowler, and all his noysom Plagues and Temptations. O! still cover us, both with thy gracious Protection, and with the lovely Wings of the Holy of Holies, so that we may break the Bands of *Satan* asunder, and cast away his Cords from us, and neither have the Eyes of our Faith held from seeing thee, nor the Feet of our Affections from seeking thee, but like thy beloved and most loving Disciples, *Peter* and *John*, leave our Nets whereby we take others, and all those Entanglements whereby we are so caught our selves, and throw off every Impediment for the better, following of our Master *Christ*, under the Patronage of whose Love and Power we would roost and nestle our Beings for ever: For it is he that hath made Heaven and Earth for us, for our Habitation, and will make a new Heaven and Earth about us for our Regeneration. And since this is a greater Blessing than the first Creation of Man, let our delivery from the Jaws of Hell bring him more Honour than all his other Dealings with us, even Glory for evermore. *Amen.*

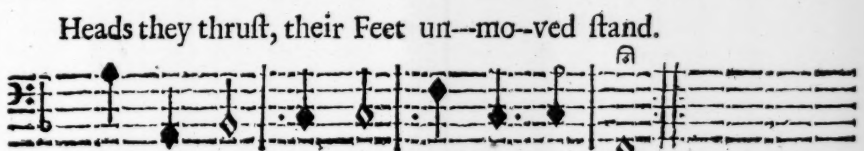
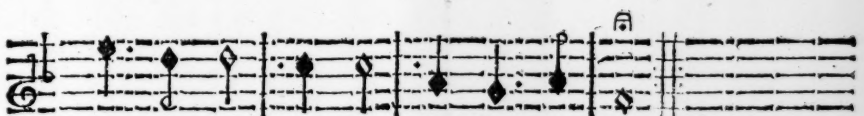
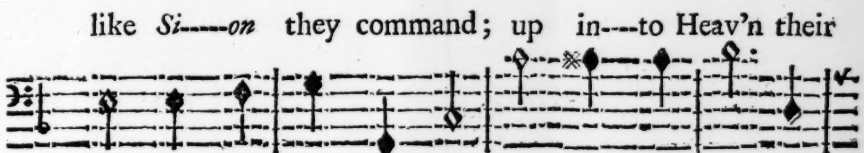
THE SIXTH
Pfalm of Degrees,
 BEING
 The CXXV. PSALM,

Like the 11th Psalm, sheweth David's Trust and Recourse to God, not like Saul to the Witch of Endor, or Wealth of Amalek, but where Believers are established and secured in the Presence of the Almighty, and perpetuity of the Church, whereby they find the goodness of their Portion, and the evil Lot of the Wicked, whatsoever he be, whether Hypocritical, Profane, or Backsliding.

It is applied by the Rabbins to the Days of the Messiah; and so by us it may be appositely used on Sacramental Days, or any such time of greater manifestation and experience of God's Integrity, and the Faith of Man.



For S. John's day.



H

Right

Right safe, high, strong, they always stand,
Like God's most Holy ground;
The Rock of Ages on each hand
Doth shade them, and surround.

As Hills *Jerusalem* surround
To deck her, and defend;
So God encircles, and hath crown'd
His folk, World without end.

As Hills, &c.

For least in Sin their Suff'rings end,
Though an *Egyptian* * Rod
To th' *Goshen* of the good extend;
'Tis thence remov'd by God.

Do good still to the Good, O ^{God} ~~Lord~~,
To him whose Heart and Line
Bend not to wrong; whose Feet ne're trod
Ways which to Hell encline.

Since such, as crooked ways encline
To do, or cherish ill,
God shall drive from him; but design
Peace to his *Israel*.

For such, &c.

Gloria Patri, &c.

To Father, Son, and * Ghost, we bow,
One glorious God w' adore:
As in beginning was, is now,
And shall be evermore.

* For the Rod or Scepter of Wickedness is the Tyranny of a *Pharaonick* Oppression over the lot of the Righteous, that is, the Church of God; which he may lay on, but will not leave, nor suffer to lye still, God having the Rod of their Portion in his hand, (alluding to the old way of Sortition by Staves, whereof see *Numb.* 17. and *Josh.* 18.)

For the Reasons mentioned, observe how aptly the Portions of the Wicked (let them be never so fat or fair, like *Esau's* here) are termed Rods to plague oft-times both themselves and others, as *Dives's* Portion did: But the Portion of the Godly is stiled a Lot, and a pleasant one, as *David's* 16 *Psal.* 6. or a Cup of Blessing indeed, like *Jacob's*; and of abundance, like *Benjamin's*, *Gen.* 33. 11. *Gen.* 44. 2.

* The suddain change in the expression of God, from the second Person to the third: As it is an elegancy in the Original, so it may note, such shall not know God (in the second Person of the Trinity)

as a Saviour, but at a far greater distance as a Judge; *Hib.* 10. 38, 39. who draw back, and turn aside (perverting their way which is already crooked, *Prov.* 14. 2.) to more depraved Obliquities, and desperate Apostacy, after a profession of the right way: But they shall be tortured with Hypocrites and Unbelievers, while he shall be kept (like *Israel*, *Gen.* 32.) in perfect Peace, whose Mind is stayed on God, *Isa.* 26. 3. to the greater vexation of those *Edomites*, who perhaps sometime persecuted him.

CON-

CONTEMPLATIONS and COLLECTS

ON THE

Sixth PSALM of DEGREES,

BEING

The CXXV. PSALM.

O Thou immutable Lord God, most faithful Creator, Redeemer, and Comforter, I desire not only to believe of thee in the world, to credit what thou art in thy self; but to trust to what thou sayest in thy Gospel, to rely on thee for what thou dost at present, and acquiesce in thee for what thou wilt do hereafter, and stay my self on thee through thine everlasting good pleasure: For thou art the Lord that dost not change, and therefore we are not consumed, but are converted from Creatures to thy Children, confirmed from our weaknesses by thy Spirit, and continued in thy service with thy self.

Ah the safety! the assurance, the steadiness, the solace, the sole and supernatural satisfaction that is in fulness of Faith upon thee the *Messiah*, the Lamb of God, who makest us thereby the Temples of the living God, the City of the Lamb, the New *Jerusalem* that shall ascend up above, and be made illustrious with all the Jewels of the concord, regularity, and brightness of Spiritual Graces, as with the eternal Riches of ineffable Love, and heavenly Glory: So that we shall never be removed from our Abode in *Jesus Christ* (thou hast made our Rock so strong), and if we believe surely we shall be establish'd for ever, for the foundation of God stands sure. As we shall here be surrounded with the munition of Rocks, (the Rock of Ages, and all his Angels) like *Jerusalem* the holy City; so also we shall be wholly blest, and saved to the very uttermost: For neither the blasts of Temptation (the Spirit that rules in the Children of Disobedience) shall attack the corners of our Dwellings, as he did *Job's* Sons; nor from the Wilderness assault us (as he did our Saviour) to spoil our Labours, or our hopes. Nor shall the storms of Tribulation be able to beat upon our House, so as to make it shake or totter: For though our building of Faith be raised high, even unto the Heavens; yet it is no *Babel*, it is no *Jericho*, but a Fabrick that the Lord will bless and defend, and because it stands upright, it shall stand fast for ever. The strength of our confidence in God shall put to flight the Armies of those Aliens that would enter and destroy its strong holds; for there are Mountains of Horseshoes, and Chariots of Fire, round about the Faithful to secure them; so that they cannot be immur'd or shut up, when never so closely begirt by Adversaries. They can still look up, nay, go up to the Hill of *Sion*, from whence comes their help, even to *Jesus*, the Author and finisher of their Faith, who not only pitched the forces of his Word and Miracles, but the red Standard of his Cross,

and the first Camp of his Martyrs and Apostles upon the Hills of *Jerusalem*, to Convoy all Comers to the City of our God, and to draw all to him from the Center of the World.

Oh therefore! let neither the Rod, nor the Staff of the Wicked, be laid or left upon my score or part, lest I do or suffer the evil of Sinners; but let thy Rod, and thy Shepherds Staff, both thy Cross and mine, dear *Jesu*, comfort and fill up my Cup, and make mine Heritage and Lot like thine: For then it shall be good, and thou that art so, ever wilt do good to me, making and keeping me upright in Heart, clean in my Hands, single in mine Eye of Faith, and sound in the Feet of mine Affections, steady in the ways of thy Commandments.

Lord! if thy hand be not graciously (when most heavily) upon me, how soon may I put forth my hand unto wickedness, like *Cain*, *Pharaoh*, *Balaam*, *Achan*, and *Jeroboam*, and like *Judas*, *Ananias*, and *Simon Magus*.

This makes me yet pray more earnestly, that Christ may still pray for me, since he that Christ prays for shall believe aright; and he that so believes, shall not find upon his lot the Scepter of Unrighteousness, the Rule of Satan, the Domination of Sin, the Rod of the Wicked, the Guilt or Punishment of Reprobates.

Oh then! that my lot and last end may be in the Righteousness of *Jesus* my Lord, that I may not fall presumptuously, nor fear greatly, nor be driven forth with evil doers; but be led forth into the Paths of Peace into the straight way that leads to life, there to taste of the Brook in the way (the quiet and sufficiency thou affordest thy Flock here) and to drink of the Rivers of thy Pleasures hereafter; to lye down like thy Sheep in the green Pastures of Hope, in the never fading, never failing enclosure of thine Arms, and to rise in Glory with thine Inheritance for evermore. *Amen.*

THE SEVENTH

Psalm of Degrees,

BEING

The CXXVI. PSALM,

Is thought to be composed by Elsdas, or some of that time, after the Babylonish Bondage, because in the first part of the Psalm it joyfully Celebrates the Return of some, as in the second part heartily wishes the Restoration of all the rest of the Captivity, from the Land of the North, (as the Realm of Babylon is called, in Jer. 13. 19, regard of its site to Judea) making that apt and excellent resemblance of them to Streams, running into the dry and desolate parts of the South, which must needs be very welcome there, and are said to flow thither as Torrents in great abundance, upon the melting of the Snows, and producing of Showers by the South Wind: So that whether you take נגב for the South Wind, or South part of the World, the comparison may hold to either acceptation of the Word very full and elegant. The Jews flocking Southwards home, but (not all together) as the Spirit of God moved on the Waters in Babylon, in the Days of Cyrus, Darius, and Xerxes, stirring up Zerubbabel, Ezra, Nehemiah, and others, to bring back the Hebrews, restore Religion, rebuild the Temple, and repair Jerusalem, which had been demolished and burnt by Nebuzaradan in the 2 Kin. 25. 8. fifth Month, (זא) and in that same Month (about Harvest time) was the Return of the Jews with Ezra, c. 7. v. 9. who had been led away Captive at their Sowing time: Therefore the Simile of the Husbandman here was rarely apposite, both to the occasion of their Joy, and season of the Year, and their manner of Exaltation.

This PSALM is very proper for our 23^d of April, and 29th of May, or any such happy Time of recovery from Trouble, Danger, and Oppression.



AFTER the long Night of a State, fo

dark as ours, fo de—fo—late; who could fo much as

Dream, that we should wake out of Cap—ti—vi—ty?

But when God took that Plague a—way, that E—gypt

which on Si—on lay; our Pangs, like Dreams, a—way did fly,

and we had safe de—li—ve—ry.

Pleas'd

Pleas'd, and transported with our Change,
By a Recovery so strange;
(As Cripples cur'd by Wonders) we
Soon got both Strength and Liberty.

Act 3. 9

Soon we got well, well home; and found
Grief did no Soul; no Body wound:
But Hearts and Tongues in Psalms agree,
And they got Feet as well as we.

Then both our Chains and Silence broke;
Then *Pagans* too, the Truth thus spoke:
The Lord hath done great things for ye;
The Lord hath done so, answer'd we.

Therefore God's Works with joy we tell,
Which may convince the Infidel;
And call up Pray'rs for such as be
Not yet return'd from Slavery.

O! were our Friends (our Foes and all)
Redeem'd from their *Egyptian* Thrall;
From Satan, and from Sin set free,
How welcome were their Liberty?

Welcom as *Nilus* in the South,
And sweet as Show'rs in days of Drouth;
For all, with us, we long to see
Reap Mirth, who plough'd in Misery.

Sure, Lord, thy Lab'ers, in the heat
Who take the pains, shall tast the Wheat;
And may with shouts receive from thee
A Largess of Prosperity.

2 Thes. 3. 7,
8, 9

We, who dropt little hopes in Tears,
When driven hence by Foes or Fears;
Now loaded back with Solace, see
Rich Incomes from Captivity.

Thus the poor Seeds-man sadly goes,
While on the ground his Wealth he strows;
But when the Harvest Crowns him, he
Jogs home with Sheaves and jollity.

*Eundo ibi, &
fendo porcum
pretium semina-
ris: pretiosum
ob caritatem.*

So they who shed a few small Tears
I'th' Seed-time of their Hopes and Fears,
Shall glad Returns from Sadness see,
And shock up more Felicity.

*Veniendo ve-
niet cum grati-
asione.*

Nay, he that goes from hence, and bears
To Earth his Dust, to Heav'n his Tears;
Shall find those precious Grains to be
Vast Crops in blest Eternity.

Gloria Patri, &c.

*In the Lord's Praise let none be dumb,
But Father, Son, and Ghost adore:
Who was, and is, and is to come,
Thrice Blessed God for evermore.*

CON-

CONTEMPLATIONS and COLLECTS

ON THE

Seventh PSALM of DEGREES,

BEING

The C X X V I. P S A L M.

O Most dear Redeemer *Jesus*, who wouldest be the Lord our Righteousness, we must confess thou mightest justly become our Enemy, (as *Joseph's* Brethren became his Foes) because of the multitude of our Dreams; those vain conceits of Happiness which have been trusted and lean'd upon, though but *Egyptian* Reeds, have greatly merited thy Punishment, and our farther deceptions. We have deserved to be most terribly mistaken, like the hungry wretch, who dreams he eats, but he awakes, and behold he is faint, and the more famisht. Thus are our Souls but the more starved by those Visions of the Night; those short unsatisfying pleasures; those shadows, and fond imaginations, in which we have been lull'd asleep by the Flesh, the World, and the Evil one, leading us Captive by them at their pleasure. But, Lord, if thou wilt teach us like thy self, to lead Captivity Captive, and to subdue their triple Band that lies in Ambush against us, (as *Abimelech's* against the Men of *Shechem*) then shall we be like the Widow's Son raised even from the Dead: We shall not only recover our strength wonderfully, as did the Cripple, before we go hence, but be recalled with *Lazarus* to newness of Life, and have our Wills and Faculties unbound, our Mouths and Hearts opened, our Hands and Feet loos'd and enlarged to sing the Praises of the Lord, to run the Paths of his Commands, and to teach Transgressors his ways, that so Sinners may be converted unto him, admiring the great things which God hath done for us, and we praise him for continually; for as God's Praise must be ever in our Mouths upon the account of his miraculous Redemption of us, (who were conquered and taken, enslaved and sold) so ought we incessantly to pray for the Conversion of others, (remembering those that are in Bonds as bound with them) and that thy Servants, O Christ! who are many, may be made one Bread, and they who sit in the darkness of Ignorance, or in the shadows of Error, may be delivered from the power of Satan, into the glorious Liberty of the Sons of God.

Blessed Lord! thou hast Brethren here that the World knows not, nor thinks to be such. O! that all the Sheep, though they have gone astray, may be reduced from their Wanderings, and brought out of their Wilderness, Condition, and desert State, by resting on the Shoulders of thy Power, and leaning on the Bosom of thy Love. O thou well-beloved and best loving *Jesus*! how grateful, gracious, and desirable, how profitable, sweet, and suitable will such a stream of Grace prove to thine *Israel* in their Pilgrimage? It will be a Well

K

Spring-

springing up, and raising thy poor Creatures unto Life; it will be like drops upon the tender Herb, like showers upon the thirsty Ground; making the hard-hearted and barren Soul to rejoyce, and to break forth into gladness, and into fruitfulness: For when thy Word distills like the Dew, and thou sendest a gracious Rain upon thine Heritage, it must needs be refresh'd and renew'd like the face of the good Ground which thou hast Bless'd; for that which is sterile is nigh unto Cursing, but that which kindly receives the Rain that comes oft upon it, brings forth Food meet for him by whom it is dressed, what kind of Husbandry soever he useth towards it. So we beseech thee grant, O thou good Husbandman! that (since thou dost so plentifully shower amongst us thy benefits, and the good tidings of the Gospel) we may bring forth the fruits of thy Spirit, such as are proper for our places and conditions, and for the Ages of our Lives, and of the World, what way soever thou takest with us, whether thou break us up by the Plough of Afflictions, or dig about us by forbearance and prosperities.

We know that he who Sows the good Seed of thy Grace in an honest Heart with the Tears of true Remorse (although the Enemy should mingle Tares among the Wheat, yet) being a painful Labourer, shall Reap a good Crop at the Harvest of the World, and that with Joy, and not with Grief; for godly Sorrow worketh Repentance unto Salvation, not to be repented of. Let us not therefore sorrow, as do many, for Temporal losses, but rather let us rejoyce that thou pourest down plentifully of thy Grace upon us, which is better than abundance of Corn and Wine. And so even when we go forth, with *Peter*, weeping bitterly for our Sins, if we bear with us the precious Seeds of Adoption and Regeneration; and these abide with us, although we may lye down in the dust of Death, or go out of the Land of the Living here, yet shall we come again with Bosoms full of Joy, and with Arms full of a *Jesus* that went out before us bearing our Reproach, and who with Tears and strong Cries pleaded for the handful that was given him out of the World; and shall come again like a happy Reaper, bringing Sheaves of Corn with him, that the people whom he hath laboured for, and united unto himself, may be crowned with Victory, Prosperity, and Glory, and compleated with Gladness with him for evermore. *Amen.*

THE EIGHTH
 Psalm of Degrees,
 BEING
 The CXXVII. P S A L M,

Was compiled by Solomon; as a Compendium of his Ecclesiastes, shewing the Vanity (and therein the vexation) of all worldly Travel and Care without God's Blessing, in the principal instances of this Life's concernment, which are the building of our Houses by strength and safety, as in the first Verse; by Frugality and Wealth, as in the second Verse; and chiefly by Children and Heirs, to make our Habitations, Names, and Inheritances to remain for ever, as much as in us lieth, as in the third: And this I take to be the meaning here of building an House, as it is the work of the Master of a Family in Oeconomy, rather than that of the Mathematician in Architecture: And in this sense the Phrase is taken oft in Scripture; as we read, God gave the Midwives for their Faith, Hope, and Charity, Protection, Riches, and Progeny, to support their Families: So likewise, the promise of God's building David's House, is explained by giving him Issue, which should establish his Kingdom better than Solomon could do, notwithstanding all his Wisdom, Power, and number of Women; since we read but of one Son (and he weak and infirm) which that mighty Builder raised up to support the Royal State, Crown and Dignity of the House of David. Exod. i. 21.
1 Chron. 17.
10, 11.

Well then might the Author of this Psalm (who hath inserted his Name מִיָּדָי in the second Verse) be a Type of the Messiah, and begin to affirm and reiterate the Nisi Dominus here, and infer that, Except the Lord (David's Lord, as well as Son) did build his House, Solomon, and other Kings, should but labour in vain.

This Psalm might be superscribed with מִיָּדָי, as being sung with loud and frequent Responses by the Levites, at the erecting and re-edifying of the Temple, and therefore intended by me ~~some~~ as an Anthem for the Day of a Nativity, or Baptism.

For Shrove-
Tuesday, or
a Wedding.



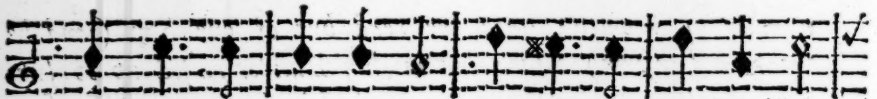
IL God the House doth build, and Fa--mi-



ly maintaint; Workmen, tho' ne're so strong, or skill'd,



La--bour, a---las! in vain. Fa--thers get Sons in vain;



in vain the Watchmen ward our Gates, un--less the Lord



or--dain his Host, to be our Guard.



In

In vain a Life we keep,
Rise early, late take Rest;
Fare hardly, lose our loved Sleep,
'Till God our Stock hath blest.

For I take it
with the 72
3^{ma} 8^o,
when others
take pains
with care to
provide for
their Families,
God's Beloved
thrive better,
and yet do
not so much
as lose their
sleep, or rest, in pursuit of those enjoyments, which others incessantly toyl for. This shews
the vanity of our Solitude, as the other sence (*viz.* so he gives) speaks God's Blessing of
honest Labour, whereby he brings Rest, and makes both it, and what else got by Labour,
pleasant, according to *Eccles.* 5. 11.

But they, whom God hath blest,
Like *Job*, regain their Peace;
God gives his *Jedidiah's* Rest,
And with their Rest; Encrease.

Nempe Dile-
cti Domini,
viz. Jedidiah's, *such*
as Solomon:

Look, ev'n our best Encrease,
Children come from the Lord;
Those Fruits of th' Womb, which some may guess
Man's Work, are God's Reward.

Ruth 4. 13:
Gen. 30. 2:

Children both give, and Ward
A blow; for (though but young)
To Parents they're a double Guard,
Like Weapons to the Strong.

Those Shafts help against wrong,
Life against Death provide;
Like *Jonathan's*, they home are flung
To shield our threaten'd side.

Happy the Man, whose side
Bears Quivers of such Arms;
For wheresoe're his Cause is try'd,
He's quit of Shame and Harms.

All Children
are given as
an Inheri-
tance, passing
from the Fa-
ther of Hea-
ven to us,
not purchas'd
by our own
Ability; but
the Wife and
Good are
more than
David's plea-
sant and
goodly Heri-
tage; for
they are also
a Reward
(as here)
and a Crown,
especially
such as are
born to us in
our stronger
and youthful
Age; who
may be
grown up,
and able to
give advice
and assistance,
and ready at
hand to help
or adorn, as Arrows in the Quiver of an Archer; so that we may go in or out of the Gates
of our House, City, or Lie, with honour and safety, and speak either with Friends or Foes,
strong or great, the Judge or General.

Whether it be in public in the sight of all, (as *Aben Ezra* construes in *Porta*) or whether
it be in the place where the People assemble, where the Nobles meet, where the Thrones are
set, the Prophets prophecy, the Right is pleaded, the Guards are kept, the Soldiers stand;
and the Judges sit, as they did formerly in the Gate. Vide *Ruth* 4. 1. 1 *King.* 22. 10. 2 *King.* 7.
20. *Judg.* 9. 52. &c.

Thus we, whom God hath Blest,
 Like *Job*, regain our Peace;
 Since God gives his Beloved Rest,
 And with our Rest encrease.

Gloria Patri, &c.

To God the Father, Son,
 And God the Holy-Ghost,
 Be Glory; and let every one
 Strive who shall praise God most.

HOSANNA.

CON-

CONTEMPLATIONS and COLLECTS

ON THE

Eighth PSALM of DEGREES,

BEING

The CXXVII. PSALM.

Gracious Father ! who workest hitherto as thy Son also worketh, look upon us thy Workmanship, make us thy Building, who as lively Stones, well wrought and figured, would be built up a Spiritual House unto thee : And we know, except thy Divine Wisdom thus frame and raise us, bearing up the Pillars of our Strength, hewing out the Stones of our hard Hearts to be polished Corners of thy Temple, we shall prove but sorry Tabernacles, but foolish Builders, and Labourers in vain : For who amongst us can say, that he hath made his Heart clean ? Who can come to the Rock to lay a good Foundation, except it be given him from above ? Or who can keep himself so clean, as that the foul and wicked Spirit touch him not, nor enter in again after he hath been cast out of a Man, except thou, O Lord ! who art stronger than the Enemy, dost watch and defend the House of the poor Soul ? Thou must work all our Works in us, and for us, for without thee we can do nothing. O therefore ! raise, strengthen, stablish, and compleat us thou glorious *Solomon*, thou who must edifie us by thy Apostles and Teachers, and instruct us how to be Temples for thy holiest Spirit, and the Heritage of the Lord for evermore.

We must acknowledge that our best Skill, and carefullest Actions, our Watchings and Fastings, our Righteousness and Charities, are as Stones which thou, O Master Builder ! mightest refuse, being fit for nothing but to debase and throw us down to Hell, affording us no prop or safe reliance upon them. 'Tis thou alone, O truest *Jedidiah* ! that foundest thy beloved Church upon the Corner-Stone of Faith, which edifies with joy and peace, with rest and firmness in believing. So build us up, we beseech thee, and watch over our Souls, that we may not be found to have watch'd, or to have work'd, to have instructed our Hearts, to have cleansed our Hands in vain, but to have done the Work, and compleated the Task which thou hast appointed us to do, by edifying both our selves and others in our most holy Faith. We throw our selves, Lord *Jesus*, on thy gentlest Bosom of Compassions, to be regarded and instructed by thee, and trust that we are not *Judas's* whilst we eat of thy Bread, and drink of thy Cup, but shall be unto thee Sons and Daughters, such an Inheritance as may be the Crown of thy Rejoycing, the purchase of thy Labours, the proof of thy Power, the Arrows in thy Quiver, with which thou mayest triumphantly come to the Almighty, and say, *Behold me, and the Children which thou hast given me.*

Let not thine Arms be full or weary, dear Lord, 'till thou hast enclosed our Souls within them, and made us so the Children of thy strength, as that we may be able to come with boldness to the Throne of Grace, and neither be affrighted when we meet with our Enemies in the Gate of Death, nor when we shall speak with our Accuser, and our Judge, at the great Tribunal of the last day.

From the various Proofs of thy tenderness over thy Flock, in giving them repose and comfort, and blest content, in the midst of their hard fare, hard work, and harder want, O skilful Shepherd of our Souls, let us learn to cast our Care upon thee for our protection and provision, for thy preservation of our Persons, and propagation of our Families; and if thou carest for us, we need take no more care than *Abraham* did, for God will provide for us, for our Off-spring, for our chief Good, and for his Glory: The Lord shall build his *David* a House, and he will be an exceeding great Reward (even above that of the Fruit of the Womb) unto his Friend *Abraham*, whose Children we are if we believe as he: *Lord, we believe, help our unbelief*, that we might not throw away our loved sleep, much less our best beloved Souls, in carking after the things of this Life, whether they be Pleasures, Profits, Power, Posterity, Preferments, or vain Past-times; for what are these in respect of a Soul? But giving up our Souls, Estates, and Concernments, into the hands of a faithful Creator, who is able to keep them and us to the very uttermost, let us be preserved not only in perfect Peace and Prosperity in this Life, but also in a happy and safe Repose even in Death it self, when we expect to rest from our Labours, and to sleep in Jesus. *Amen.*

THE NINTH
Pfalm of Degrees,
 BEING
 The CXXVIII. PSALM,

Is a Description of the Felicities of such Good Men, as fear the Lord, (that is, say the Rabbins) who cease to do evil, and learn to do well; who walk in the ways of God, and are not only negatively good but positively; making their own hands minister to their Necessities, (as the Apostle did) knowing that he who will not labour shall not eat: But such as labour honestly, (either to obtain a lively-hood and Subsistence here, or a better Life hereafter) shall find the fruit of their Pains to be Peace and Plenty: Not the Apples of Sodom. or Clusters of Gomorrah; but those of Mercies Temporal, Spiritual, Eternal: Such as are here enumerated, from the 2d. Verse to the end, far better than by any other Poet.

Amongst which Blessings, (as to this World) the greatest are esteemed,

*Vitamque faci-
 ciunt Beatio-
 rem, &c.
 Marial. lib.
 10. Epig. 47.*

1. *A Fruitful Meet Companion, neither barren in good Works, nor Off-spring: And therefore compared to a Vine; or because (saith Kimchi) she can live well and plentifully within Doors, and only desires that her Branches may go abroad: As a Vine (saith he) will grow and flourish though rooted within a House, so the spreading Limbs be carried into the Air.*

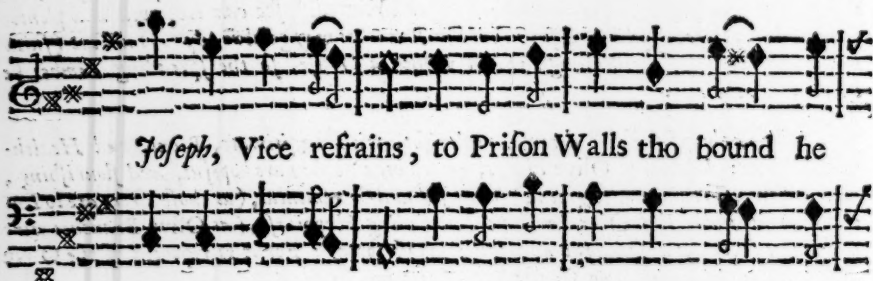
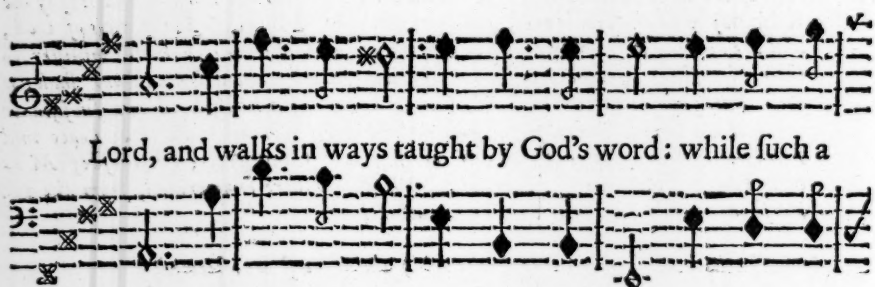
2. *Then a chearful Table decently replenish'd, with Legitimate, Pious, and Healthful Children: Likened to Olive Plants, either because they are hopeful, and flourishing, (as the Olive Tree is always green;) or useful and Ornamental, (as those Trees are to Entertainments in the East;) or Emblems of unfading Happiness, (as Olive Branches were to Victors;) or not a shameful and spurious Off-spring: For it is reported of the Olive Stock, that it will nourish no Grafts; but of its own Kind.*

These Blessings being described by two such admirable sweet Comparisons, (that strive to cheer and refresh the Laborious and Prosperous Man) the Author breaks off his Apostrophe by a short Epiphonema in the 5th Ver. (but who the Author of this Psalm was appears not) and then in the 6th and 7th Ver. goes on to pray for other Joys for the good Man, towards the compleating those promis'd in the 2. 3. 4. Verses. Which indeed so fed, nay feast'd my eager Thoughts with that most excellent Scripture Abundance, express'd by Corn and Oyl, (that which Cheers and Honours God and Man) that I could not withhold from enlarging my delight in ruminating thus far upon it.

Like the fat Olive, and the fruitful Vine,
 Chearful to make Man's Heart, his Face to shine,
 Are well bred Children, and fruitful Wife;
 In this World's Paradise those Trees of Life:
 They wander not afar, but still abide
 By their own lucky Boards, or House's side:
 At Home they Live and Thrive, fix and Encrease.
 The Prosperous Signs of Plenty, Mirth, and Peace.

Pax (scu Pacem) super Israel, concludes the Psalm, as the 125.

This seems proper for a Wedding day, or any such time of Festivity, and therefore us'd thus Solemnly to be Sung after the Captivity by the Levites, among the other Psalms of Degrees: And it is intended by me for St. Lucy's day, and New-year's Tide.



Who

Who e're thou art that fear'st the Lord,
Fearing to sin in work or word,
Plenty, with Ease, shall crown thy Pain;
Thy Hands shall get Wealth that will last,
The Sweets of which thy Lips shall tast,
Doubling, by relishing, thy Gain.

Thy Wife shall, like a fruitful Vine,
Deck thy House-side, as well as thine,
And see thine Off-spring shade thy Board;
As pleasant Olive-Plants are set,
To grace and guard thee at thy Meat,
Thus art thou Blest that fear'st the Lord.

Ruth 4. II, 12.

In Heav'n thrice happy shalt thou be,
As here below 'tis well with thee,
Thy Joys from *Sion* still encrease;
Thine Age to three Descents shall see
Thine Issue fair, thy Nation free;
And (what is best) on *Israel* Peace.

As here below 'tis well with thee,
In Heav'n thrice happy shalt thou be,
From *Sion's* shall thy Joys encrease;
Thou shalt out-live one Age, to see
Good on thy Land and Family,
And (which is best) on *Israel* Peace.

Gloria Patri, &c.

Glory be to the Father, Son,
And Holy-Ghost, the Three in One;
Whose Deity we shall adore;
Since ev'ry Person of the Three
For ever was, shall ever be,
And is, God Blessed evermore.

CONTEMPLATIONS and COLLECTS

ON THE

Ninth PSALM of DEGREES,

BEING

The CXXVIII. PSALM.

O Most glorious and gracious Lord God, who art fit to be feared, and worthy to be loved, grant that I may not only serve thee out of *filial* Reverence, and sense of Duty, but also and chiefly out of most passionate Affection and Delight, walking in thy ways as well as learning them, and doing thy

thy Will as well as knowing it, from a principle of entire and true Love, and of full and absolute Choice. Grant that whether I am born unto Trouble and Care, or to eat and reap the Fruit of others Pains, both by my own and others Labours, my Repose may be afterwards more sweet and nourishing, and my Enjoyments more solid, as my Endeavours successful, while I have Religion, though not Riches, and that which with *Content is great Gain*, notwithstanding the shortness and loss of worldly Treasures.

If I partake of the true Vine, and of the travel of his Soul, who was full as God, and made full as Man, that of his fulness we might receive and feast for evermore, then how well shall it be with me here? How much better hereafter? Come what can come I shall have comfort enough in this World, and a Crown in the next: Nay, I shall be a Crown to my dear Bridegroom, a Glory to my Redeemer, as the wife Spouse is to her Husband; for in this, good and true is the Word of the Lord which he hath spoken (not only in the Literal, but also in the Spiritual sense) and so shall his Work be; as to the Head, so to the Members. He will make the Church *Christ's Wife*, and she shall be a Vine as well as he, and so great a Bearer, as that she shall cover and adorn all the sides of his House, and bring him clusters of *Eshcol*, Grapes of *Sion*, Loads of Comfort and Satisfactions, Tokens of Plenty and Delight, for having trodden the Wine-Press alone.

And then, O beloved Husbandman! when thou shalt visit this Vine, and behold the Off-spring which thou hast brought her with transports of Joy and Contentation, O! then look upon me and mine, and see us grafted into the right Olive, though we be sprung from that which is wild by nature, that we may grow up as Plants of thy own planting, and flourish round about thy Table: For this hath God promised unto thee, O Christ! and we beseech thee to make it good unto us, by making us thy Children. O Lord! how should we praise, honour, and serve thee? Were we, like *David*, such Olive Trees as might be fixed in thy House, and framed into more holy Uses, to be farther instrumental to thy Glory? Behold a greater than *Solomon* is here to make us fit to attend thy Oracles, and with the Cherubs to be near thy Mercy Seat. Dear God! prepare us for such high places there, however thou cut and strike us here, that we might be the better formed, and wrought out of the World's glory, for our own, into thine, even by the beauty of Holiness, that New *Jerusalem* that comes down from above. Then shall we admire the good of Sanctity, and wish the good of thy People all the days of our life, and rejoyce in the happiness of thy Chosen all the days of Eternity: For as we are Blest in serving thee out of thy House and Sanctuary, so we hope to be Blessed with thee in thy holy Hill of *Sion*, where we shall see the glorious Harvest of all Ages, the eternal Happiness of our Generations, and the never-fading Peace of thy chosen *Israel*. AMEN.

THE TENTH

Psalm of Degrees,

BEING

The CXXIX. PSALM,

Is a Commemoration, not unlike that Solemn one, which every true Israelite was to make at the Offering of the First-Fruits; and Deut. 26. Secondly, a Prognostication of the cursed End and Ruine of ^{35, 36, 37.} the Church her Enemies, from the Consideration of the wonderful Deliverance which God had wrought, and reiterated for his People a Juventute (both from theirs and the World's Infancy;) so that at length their Adversaries, according to their Prayers, shall be but weak, few, like the Grass on the House top, that ^{נֶחֱשׁׁוּ וְנִמְצְאוּ} withers before it's pulling. ^{נֶחֱשׁוּ. not growing up; there being}

formerly a Meter, or gatherer of Grass (as we have now of Grain), most in fashion about those fertile Countries, where Grass is of an excessive length even at this day, (as modern Travellers affirm.)

But Zion's Foes (saith Ezra, or whosoever it was, who in his Time compiled this Prophetical Psalm and Prayer) shall one Day be so inconsiderable, that as they shall have no Eulogies to encourage their Growth or Harvest, so they shall need no Weapon to cut them down; for they shall drop away shamefully of their own accord, without a Dominus Vobiscum said unto them: For all they may ^{1 Cor. 14.} say (though not of a Truth) what once a Sennacherib and a ^{25. Isa. 36. 10.} Rabshakeh falsely affirmed, That God is with us.

Quâ de causâ à me Selectus est hic Hymnus in Tertium Septembris. Propter M. O. C. nec non in Quintum Novembris.



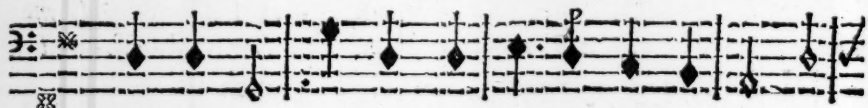
tell, what Troubles in his time be--fell; how few



and e--vil were his Days? How hard Life's travel



in rough ways: In Ca--naan well may If--rael say, From



my Youth up, God was my stay.



From

From my Youth up I met with Foes;
But to God's House I 'scap'd from those;
Many a time was I assail'd,
But I as many times prevail'd:

*Gen. 28. 16.
17.*

God broke my Cords which they did bind,
And made them Captive, if not kind,

*Exod. 2. 24.
25.*

Long did they with deep Furrows wound,
And Plow my Back, as 'twere their Ground;
But the good Husbandman now cracks
The Ploughman's Whip on their own Backs:

*Exod. 5. 19.
Mark 15. 15.
John 15. 1.*

The Righteous Lord stays not too long
From resc'uing his who suffer wrong.

1 Cor. 10. 13.

Therefore shall Zion's Enemy
Like Fools wax faint, like Cowards fly;
Whom Pride doth cloath, Shame shall confound;
As Corn that grows in no good Ground:

*2 Sam. 3. 33.
Psal. 73. 6.
Prov. 16. 18.
Mat. 13. 5.*

But stands (with Kings) on the House-Top,
Where comes a Blast, and that's its Crop.

*2 Sam. 11. 4.
Dan. 4. 30. 31.*

Its Crop doth rot before 'tis ripe,
Nor can it fill the Reapers gripe,
Nor joy his Heart: For (what is worse)
It bears no Burthen, but a Curse.

'Tis no Man's comfort, no Man's care;
No Man for such bids one short Pray'r.

Ruth. 2. 4.

None in God's Name give such good speed,
As Boaz to his Harvest did:

[Gloria Patri.]

But we to God will Glory give,
Who, with the Son, and Spirit, doth live:

God Reigns, and shall, as heretofore;
Bless'd be his Name for evermore.

CON.

CONTEMPLATIONS and COLLECTS

ON THE

Tenth PSALM of DEGREES,

BEING

The CXXIX. PSALM.

O Dearest *Jesu*! let me behold thee as an *Israelite* indeed, in whom *there was no guile*, and yet how many a time, even from *Herod's* persecution of thee in thy Youth, wert thou afflicted. Thou didst grow up as a Stem out of a dry Ground, very poorly and despicably in the Eyes of the vain proud World, who looked for another appearance and attendance than thou, O King of Glory! didst affect on Earth, and therefore wert thou rejected as a Man of Sadness. And well mightest thou be acquainted with much Grief, when thou didst bear our greatest Sins, even those whereby we did set thee at nought, (as did *Herod* and his Soldiers) and even sought the holy Child, the First-born of Grace, in our Hearts to take away its Life.

O Lord! we must confess how many a time, too often, we have betrayed and exposed thy Name and Body, thy Word and Members, to Shame and Reproach, to Indignities and Sufferings: We have smitten and pierced them through with many Sorrows; we have knotted the Whip, and lengthen'd out the Rods to plough thy Back, (as the *Jews* did by their lashing Taunts when thou wert dying on the Cross) only to non-plus thy Love and patience if it were possible: But the Lord is Righteous, and the Lord is Merciful, and therefore he hath cut asunder the Cords of the Wicked, and by his Righteousness shall justify many, as also confound all such as have evil will towards his *Zion*. Grant therefore, dear Lord! that we may not prove such a Crop as grows upon the House, or among the Stones, which withereth as soon as it is put forth. But as from our Childhood, we have been acquainted graciously with thy Mind and Gospel, so grant that we may grow up in Grace, and in the knowledge of a Saviour, and have the Blessing of Almighty God from the very Ground of our Hearts, to the last Harvest of our Lives, and be able to bless many others, as *Boaz* did, in the Name of thee,

Our Father, &c.

TO thee, dear God! be all the Dominion, the Power and Glory of my Being, for thou hast ^{very} preserved it from the fury of my Adversaries ever since the first motions of that evil Figment in my Heart, which hath broke out often into evil Concupiscences, and endeavoured to plough with my Heifer, to plot with my naughty Flesh, to bind and to deliver me a Prisoner unto Satan; but my Lusts have not led me Captive, nor plough'd upon my Back as they conspired to

O

do,

do, for thou, O Lord most just and holy ! wouldest not suffer them to Tyrannize or Triumph too long over me, but hast broke those Bands of Wickedness, and cast their Cords from me, that I might be thy Servant, and ~~thou~~^{the} Lord my Righteousness : So that I trust they shall be confounded that contend with thee for my Soul, and I shall not be ashamed while I wait on thee, though my Flesh be as Grass that withers away. Thou art my Strength, O Lord, and my Portion for ever, who wilt, I trust, give a Blessing to my Seed, to my Harvest, to my House, to my Endeavours and Encrease, that my Work and thine may prosper in my hand, and bring fulness of Joy and Satisfaction to my Breast, while all the vain Thoughts, and viler Suggestions of my Heart, I desire so to hate, as to wish (like the Grass upon the House tops withered and faded away) that they may never grow up to a Crop, lest (sowing the Wind) I Reap the Whirlwind, and have my Recompence in vanity (according to my delight or trust,) and come to nothing before my time. But, O Lord ! I wait on thee for a Blessing in this my day, and for thine Eternity, that I may be like a Field whom God hath enriched ; if he be not on my side, I cannot prosper, and I know, him whom thou bledest is Blessed : *Bless me therefore, even me, O !*

Our Father, &c.

T H E

THE ELEVENTH

Psalm of Degrees,

BEING

The CXXX. PSALM.

Ὠδὴ ᾠδὴ ἀνακαθήμενον ἐκ βάθρων; De dolore Profundo, & ex imo corde; and not (as the Papists would have it) De Profundis Purgatorii, to be used for the Dead: It is an Act and incitement of Hope, under the most weighty Pressures, from this Proof, viz. That neither with the strongest Angels, nor Saints departed, (much less with the greatest, or best of Men upon Earth) is any Pardon or Propitiation to be found, but only with God; who alloweth us here space and place for Repentance, that he may be feared, (not so slavishly as to be fled from, or hated) that he may be sued unto, adored, and attended on, in the holy Duties of Prayer, Praise, and Trust; which are comprized in this Psalm to be used sedulously and constantly night and day, according to that which the Repetition of the comparison in the sixth Verse doth infer, which is thus gloss'd on by Kimchi: My Soul waiteth in the Night for the Lord, that it may be in the number of those who rise in the Morning-Watch to pray. And this sense being most comprehensive of the Times and Method, both of Jewish, and the greatest of Devotion, I follow it in my Version, and desire to do so in my Practice.

This Psalm was made (as some think) in the time of the Captivity, for Redemption from it, as may be judged by the last Verse: But others ascribe it to David, giving it the same Date with the 51st, and is reckon'd the sixth of the Penitentials, i. e. of those which were used when public Penitents were brought and reconciled to the Church, who might well say, Because there is Pardon (as saith the Text) or Propitiation (as the 72^d) with thee,

O Lord, therefore shalt thou be feared, *i. e.* obeyed;
ἐνεργ. τῶ νόμῳ, *not ἐνὸς λόγῳ* σὲ, because the mildness of his Laws,
 and meekness of his Dealings, were strong Motives for Repen-
 tance.

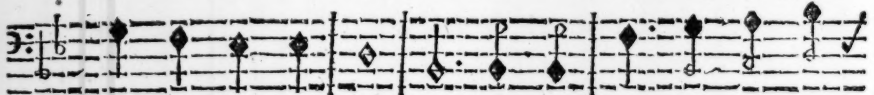
Anthema Hocce à me usitatum est, ut primò factum,
 in Secundum Octobris.



UT of the Deep, wherein, like



Jo--nas, I was try'd; out of the mire of Sin, my



Clay to God hath cry'd, Lord hear my Voice, give what I crave;



O! let me have thy Love, Heav'ns Joys.



Too oft we chuse false Joys ;
And should'st thou be severe
To chasten our ill Choice ,
What Man his Ills can bear ?

But we have prov'd , Pardon's with thee ;
That thou may'st be Both fear'd and lov'd.

I'll fear, lest thou art lov'd
Too little ; and I'll flee
(When Fear my Heart hath mov'd)
Unto thy Sanctuary :

Early and late There waits the Lord ,
Grace to afford ; Therefore I'll wait.

My Soul on high shall wait ,
(Like those, who watch the rise
Of Day) to Officiate
At Morning Sacrifice.

Nay, like the Guard ; Who long 'till Light
Remove the Night, And them reward.

'Till *Jacob's* Star reward
Your Hopes, and on you rise ;
Wait *Israel* on your Lord
With wakeful wishing Eyes.

Look 'till the Sun Of Righteousness
Doth heal and blest , And brings God's Son.

O! shield ye with his Sun
God's People, trust his Word ;
Since full Salvation
Attends our gracious Lord :

There's Pity seen , And Pow'r in him ,
Who will Redeem Us from all Sin.

Gloria Patri, &c.

*Glory be to our King,
Who shall be, was, and is;
Loud Hallelujahs Sing
To God, the God of Peace.*

*The Lord of Hosts, The Three in One,
The Father, Son, And Holy-Ghost.*

AMEN.

CON.

CONTEMPLATIONS and COLLECTS

ON THE

Eleventh PSALM of DEGREES,

BEING

The CXXX. PSALM.

O Dearest *Jesus*! when I consider thee, crying with strong Cries to thy Father for me out of the depths of thine Agony, and of thy Sufferings, both in *Gethsemane*, and in *Golgotha*, how am I swallowed up in the Abylles, both of thy Passion and Compassion for us! Ah! what fathomless Depths indeed! O! what unmeasurable Dimensions, both of Grief and Goodness, are there for us to be immersed in! and since they who are conversant among great Waters see the Wonders of the Lord, O! how may we behold these in the drops of thine Eyes, and of thy Wounds, in the Rivers of thy Tears, and of thy wonderful Sweat, in the Ocean of thy Love and Sorrows for Mankind! When thy Soul was heavy, and sunk down even unto Death, and all the Cataracts of Shame and Fury passed over thy Head, O King of Righteousness and Glory! yet out of the deep and horrible Pit of God's Wrath, into which thy condition was plunged for our sakes, how didst thou reach up thy very Sighs and Groans, thy Pains and Sadness, thy Prayers, and all thy Passions, unto Heaven it self, to reach us thence a Medicine, and a Remedy, more certain Health, and a more happy Life, than the lifting up of the Serpent in the Wilderness ever brought to its beholders! I will therefore look unto thee, and be enlighten'd, even while thou seemest Eclipsed; I will stay my self on the Tree of thy Cross, and secure my self under the Shadows of thy Crucifixion, when I am most cast down or overwhelmed with the Seas of my Anxieties and Trials, for the Lord hath been deeply sensible of our Infirmities, and touched to the quick with humane Miseries, that he might not be fled from, (as he was formerly, both while he stood on *Sinai*, and on *Golgotha*) but that he might be feared, and approached unto with Reverence, because there is a Propitiation with him for us, there is an Attonement made by him our High-Priest: Therefore, O God! hear my Voice, though my Sins cry aloud for Vengeance; and thou mayst be more strict (than thou wert formerly under the more imperfect Light of Nature, or of the *Mosaic* Law) to mark the failings and stumblings of Mankind now in the lightfom day-time of the Gospel; yet do thou, my Father, and my Prince, pity me in the Dungeon of my Corruptions, and draw my Feet out of the Mire of my Lusts, out of the Clay of my earthly Mindedness, out of the Waters of my worldly Sorrows, and bring me to the desired Shore of thy sure Mercies in *Christ Jesus*; set my feet on the Rock, and order my Goings, that my Foot-steps may not slip, but that I may walk in the Land of the Living unto the Land of

Jeremiab. 38. 12, 13.

JONAS. 2. 1, 6

Promise; and when I go down to the bottom of the Mountains, and the Weeds are wrapt about my Head, and the Earth with her Bars enclose me on every side, that then I may not be cast out of thy sight, nor into the Bonds of mine Iniquities, nor into the Belly of the lowest Hell: O our Father! since thou hast not left thy Son there, grant that my Life may be brought up from Corruption. I know Salvation is from thee alone, and with thee infinite abundance of Bowels of the tenderest Compassions why thou shouldest be revered and repaired unto, there is a *Jesus* in thy Bosom to redeem from all Sins, from Dangers, Enemies, and Troubles, and to represent us cover'd with his Righteousness; otherwise shouldest thou view us in our Original Nakedness, or actual Filthiness, we could not stand before thee in Judgment. But since there is Forgiveness with thee, O God! there is cause enough why we should fly unto thee, trust in thee, wait on thee, and watch for thee, more than they who watch for the Morning, for if Light be so grateful to those who walk in Darkness, how amiable is thy Countenance to us in the gloominess of this present State? And how much more lovely will it be when we lie down in the Night of Death, that the *Day-spring from on high* may visit us, and bring the joyful Morning of a Resurrection, both from Sin and the Grave? O! do thou make hast my beloved Saviour, and be as a *Roe, and a young Hart, on the Mountain of Spices*: Thou that art the Hart of the Morning, who out of the midst of thy deepest Woes, and dying Pangs, didst cry unto God for us, do thou send us timely help, for we would seek thee early in the prime of our Age, (hastening from the very dawn of our Lives to prevent the Night-Watches, and like thy Spouse or beloved *Mary*) to see the Sun of Righteousness risen on the Earth before we get to our *Zoar*.

CANT. 2.

O! that our Prayers might ascend like Incense by the meritorious lifting up of thy Body for us! Dear Lord! impute no Guilt to us, but cleanse us from all, that we may be blessed, and holy, and happy, as we beg to be, for thy own sake, O gracious Saviour! to whom be Glory, &c.

THE TWELFTH

Psalm of Degrees,

BEING

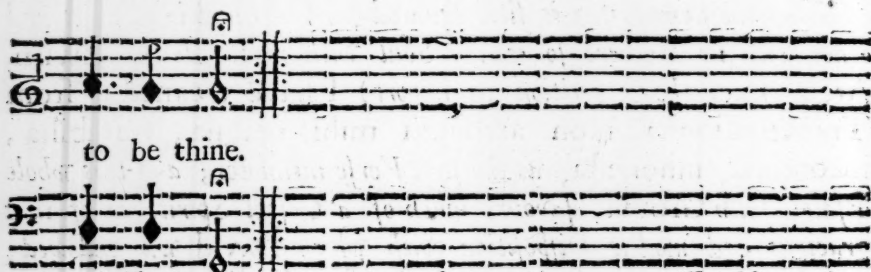
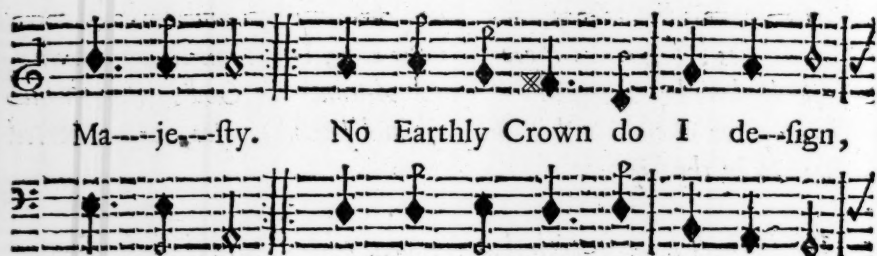
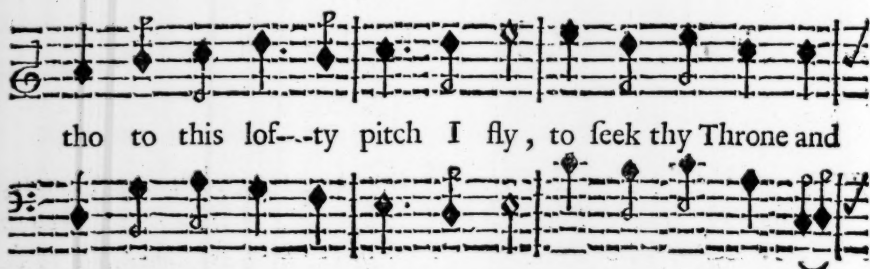
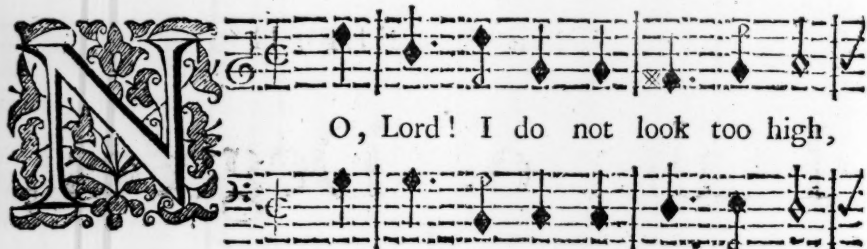
The CXXXI. PSALM,

Was composed by David in the life-time of Saul, when most humble, innocent, and distant from the Succession to the Crown, though then suspected, envied, and accused: It was appointed to be used at the Jews Return, because no temper better qualifies us for God's Mercy, nor more becomes us under the greatest Mercies, (such as those we have enjoyed) than that Humility, Self-denial, Resignation, and Affiance in God's Will, which are here exemplified in the first and second Verses, and exhorted unto in the last.

— While the Psalmist with that frequent Elegancy in the holy Tongue, suppresseth the Imprecation, and imposeth a kind of Silence upon himself after his Attestation, proceeding to an Affelevation, *Ei mi, If I have not, &c. viz. still'd and pacifi'd my Soul as the Waves, level'd and smooth'd my Brow like the face of the Ground, and have put my Hand upon my Mouth; viz. I have ceased from crying and throbbing, as at the Mother's command the Child doth, who although weaned, can without Sollicitude yield and conform to the Mother's Direction and Provision.*

Thus the Comparison is fitly squared, As a Child is in quiet and order with its Mother, so is my Soul with me: (As the Jewish, Arab. notes the Repetition to import) I have weaned it from Transgressions: Non arrogavi mihi magna, mirabilia, inconcessa, inhonesta, as the first Verse intimates; and this whole Psalm, saith Grotius, savours much of a Gospel Spirit, as of that gracious and modest Disposition with which David was endowed; eminently, so as to make him be stiled, After God's own Heart.

For Inno-
cents day.



(Like

(Like *Bethshemites*) I dare not pry
In things for me too Great, too High;
My Heart is humble as mine Eye.

But the proud Foe my Heart mistook,
Whilst I his Frowns did fairly brook,
Without returning one Ill look.

I soon lay quiet, to control
The froward Passions, that did roll
Like Waves, about to move my Soul.

My Soul is hush't; like a wean'd Child,
That from the Mother's fight exil'd,
To any thing's strait reconcil'd:

And surely I my self behave
Like a wife Man, while thus I crave
Like a weak Child, what I would have.

May *Isr'el* do, as I have done,
(To all things here indiff'rent grown)
Trust always — But in *God alone*.

May *Isr'el* do, as we, &c.

Gloria Patri, &c.

Give Glory, Praise, Dominion,
To God the Father, with the Son,
And Spirit, thrice Bless'd Three in One.

Sicut erat in Principio, &c.

Now let us all the Lord adore,
Who is the same as heretofore,
And shall be King for evermore.

HOSANNA.

Another VERSION of
 Psalm C X X X I.

[To be sung as Mr. George Sandys Paraphrase, Psal. 1.]

2 Sam. 6. 21,
 22.
 Acts 13. 22.



ORD, I'll prelude to my Lord's humblest part;
 That I may be the Man *after thine Heart*;
 I hate proud Looks, and glance not up an Eye
 At things too hard, too hidden, or too high:
 But as a Child, whom its kind Mother weans,
 (Loving the Breast) yet on her Bosom leans,
 I hold me at thy Hand; nor once repine,
 But quietly repose, receive, resign:

Wishing our *Is'el* thus may trust God still,
 And frame their State according to thy Will.

CON.

CONTEMPLATIONS and COLLECTS

ON THE

Twelfth PSALM of DEGREES,

BEING

The CXXXI. PSALM.

O Thou Son of *David*! of whom we ought to learn to be *Meek and Lowly*, let us see what kind of Disciples we are by regarding our dear Master, and find what Proficients in thy School by minding the Copy thou hast set us: There appeared not the least glance of Pride, Arrogance, or Self-love, in thy Behaviour; there was not the least Root of Bitterness in thy Breast, for thou camest to Atone the first Sin of our first Parents; and so for all thou wert exalted far above all that are here called Gods, yet thy Spirit was not haughty (as *Lucifer's*,) nor thine Eyes lift up to the forbidden Fruit. Thou wert willing to be ignorant (as *Mark 13, 32.* Man) of those things which did not besit Men to pry nicely into, that thou mightest stoop to the weaknesses of thy Body the Church, and comply more absolutely with the divine Will, and Compassionate more sensibly the Infirmities or Ignorances of Mankind. O most gracious condescending *Jesus*! how were thy Delights among the Children of Men! while thou didst not behave thy self like a *Simon Magus*, like an Impostor that would be admired for some God below; but, like thy Servant *Moses*, didst vail thy self, that thou mightest be conversed withall, and didst not walk too much obscured by thine own Lustre and Transcendency, but didst leave the Doctors and Learned *Jews* to go down with thy humble Mother into *Galilee*, and to be subject unto her as a weaned Child. And though thou wouldest not exercise thy self in things too high for thee, yet, O! how low wouldest thou appear in thy Employments? How plain in thy Countenance? how easie and affable in thy Conversation? that Publicans and Sinners, and little Children, might come unto thee, and hear thy excellent Discourses, and taste thy miraculous Provisions, while thou wentest about doing good, and telling Men that they should follow thy steps in being meek, humble, quiet, and contented, doing Good, readily suffering Evil patiently as dear Children.

Lord! How then should we abhor our selves, when we either think of thee, or of our selves! How unlike are we become to thee, if we claim any Kindred with thee! For do we not still continue, like *Leviathan*, among the Sons of Pride? Do we seem little in our own Eyes, as thy Servant *David* did, when thou didst make him a great King? Or rather do we not lift up our Wills and Understandings, and walk with a stiff Neck of Perverseness in opposition to thee, as it were, aiming even at Heaven it self, like the Tail of the old Serpent? So far are we from receiving the Kingdom of Heaven like little Children!

R

But,

But, O! when then shall it once be that we shall not be High-minded, but fear, and love, and own thee to be Lord over us? Then shall we not rashly venture with *Uzzah* to meddle with those things which are unmeet for us, or forbidden to us; but we shall be weaned from our Mother Earth, from the love of this dirty World, and from loving its foul Inclinations; and we shall cast our Cares and Affairs on thee, renouncing all Self-Trusts or Conceits, to level the face of our Souls before the feet of the holy *Jesus*; that when thou comest, O most holy Spirit! to *prepare the way of the Lord* in us, he may find no Rock nor Mountain, nothing too hard or haughty in us, nothing untractable or inaccessible to obstruct or oppose his Progress. But, O! let the too mighty Elevations of my vain Thoughts be brought down, and the crooked ways of my Heart be made strait, and the rough ways of my Condition be made smooth, that my Soul may be still quiet with me, and still'd and quietted by thee. Rebuke the tempestuous Motions of a froward Mind, that I may repose my self sweetly and safely on thy Promises, on thy Provisions, and resign my self wholly to thy Inspirations: And God grant that all thine *Israel* may (like *Jacob*) wrestle with Principalities and Powers, even in the highest and most heavenly Things; and though never so much in a Night of Cares and darkest perplexities, or to encounter with enraged Enemies, yet let them wait and hope on the Lord, and stay and strengthen themselves on their God (as *David* did at *Ziklag*,) for he is a sure Reward, and a constant Reward, a Pillar of Fire, and a Pillar of a Cloud, a Sun, and a Shield, in whose Name we ought to trust, denying our own Conjectures, Affections, and Desires, rather than an absolute Dependence on him for ever and ever. *AMEN.*

THE THIRTEENTH

Psalm of Degrees,

BEING

The CXXXII. PSALM,

Is a Narration of David's Devotion, and of God's Promises and Appointment; as to David and his Seed, and the setting of the Ark on Sion; which was a Type of the stability of Christ's Kingdom, and of the future Felicities of his Servants, in the Reign of the Son of David, (the Messiah, the Horn spoken of here in Verse 17, as the Rabbins agree) which the Apostle proves, Acts 2. 30.

Therefore it was solemnly used at the Rebuilding of Jerusalem, and most probably (as Grotius thinks) a composition of Solomon's at his raising of the Temple for the Honour of God, and the Place; containing in it part of Solomon's Prayer, part of God's Promise to the Jews, and to David.

But Kimchi and others think it made by David, at that very time, when the situation of the future Temple was miraculously shewn unto him (as it is hinted in the word *Invenimus*) by the Sign from Heaven.

For as David was absolutely forbidden the building of a Temple, so 'till the Prophet Gad came to him with a Divine Command, That he should build an Altar in the Threshing-Floor of Araunah: (For all his great desire, like Abraham's, to see such a glorious Day, and notwithstanding his Devotion, like Jacob, to the Service of God) yet he knew not the place that God would chuse, as his Heaven upon Earth, for his most eminent and

suitable Habitation: Therefore his Care and Concern chiefly reflecting on his Vows here made were the more considerable, and might well be stiled Afflictions, worthy to be Commemorated as well as his former Persecutions. His constant Humility, Meekness, pious Sollicitude, and Affection for God's Service, demonstrated in 2 Sam. 7. 2. and 1 Chron. 17. 16. and all these senses the word Afflictions will bear, as I have shewn in my Version.

Hic versus
plurimum
Hebræos
fatigat. in-
quit clarius.

Where also I have endeavoured to be as clear as I could in the Exposition of that dark place of the sixth Verse, which by some Commentators (like the Jewish Arab. here) is render'd much more shady and obscure; so that the Elegant Castalio was forced to confess, That he understood not the meaning of the Text; viz. Verse 6. Therefore herein (as all along) by the help of the Critics, with the assistance of the Learned Hammond and De Muys, I strive to sum up briefly as much of the sense as my Verse and Knowledge will give me leave to do.

Yet I cannot omit Buchanan's Version of this hard Sentence, which is as singular, as his Paraphrase elsewhere is excellent.

*Fama licet Patriæ multum promitteret oræ,
Inter saxa tamen Sylvestribus obsita dumis:
Monstravit Deus ipse locum, Deus ipse perenne
Hic Templum; Templique sacris sedem innuit Aris.*

*Though Fame hath promis'd much to Judah's Coast
By the Ark's stay, (whereof our Towns may boast;)
Yet God himself hath shewn, and we have found
Old Prophecies, (which did at Bethlem sound,
Fulfill'd on woody Hills. —*

*— where the Ark stood,
Or where it was to stand, high as a Wood.)*

For the Woods of the Field; or the Fields of the Wood, may be taken as for the House of Aminadab in the Hill of Kiriath-jarim, which was a City in a woody place, from whence David
and

and all Israel fetch'd the Ark from the House of Obed-Edom: So for the City of Jerusalem, and especially the Mount Moriah, which was a close Covert in Abraham's time, witness the Ram caught in the Thicket; and was afterwards more adorned with Wood when the Temple was built thereon: This being frequently by the Prophets called יֵדֵה, the Wood; as Bethlechem, the place of Bread, is also called Ephratah, viz. Fruitful.

It was the City of David, where he might learn from his pious Ancestors, that neither Silo, nor Gibeon, nor Nob, but Moriah, (which was a part of Mount Sion, and here by way of Eminency bears the name of the whole Hill) should be the chief place of worshipping the Mighty God of Jacob.

God is so called here, because he calls himself the Almighty, Gen. 35. when he named Jacob, Israel; and Jacob first calls God so, and 10, 11. is the first of all the Patriarchs who is mentioned to have vowed a Vow; as the most ancient Rabbi Abahu notes: Non dicitur, Gen. 49. 24. Gen. 28. 20. vovit forti Abraham, aut forti Isaac, sed forti Jacob, quod primus omnium vovit Jacob votum dicendo, &c. Dicendo quid? Dicendo omnibus, seu docendo omnes, vovendum esse in Calamitatibus.

But I think it a fine Dream of the Rabbins, who say, Jacob is here mentioned, because (in his sleep) when he saw those Degrees which reach'd Heaven, he had a Vision of the Temple that Solomon built; and being amazed at the Majesty thereof, speaks of it, and not of Bethel.

Quam Terribilis est iste Locu-
erit Bethel;
i. e. Domus Dei, seu Domus Orationis,
(Dixit)
Quandoquidem vidi hoc ipso in loco ædificatum iri Templum.
2 Sam. 24. 16, 17.

And David (as they say) made the Vow, mentioned in this Psalm, when the Plague was stayed at the Threshing-Floor of the Jebusite, and notice given him where the Temple should be built, (as I have noted before.)

Thus much may suffice by way of Argument, because I have wrote more in Annotations upon this Psalm, it being the longest and most difficult of my undertaking: Therefore I would be excused by the more Critical and Learned Reader, if the pains I took

do neither please nor profit him in the full understanding; or explaining the sense hereof; because these Notes were not intended to nauseate the public with Crambes, but to inform those, who are of as low rank in knowledge as my self.

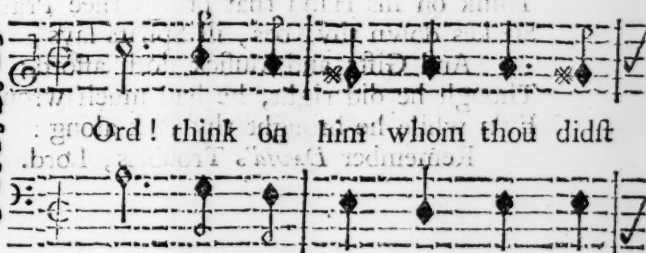
Having put the word Shechinah in the Margin of my Verses, I was once asked, why I did so? Therefore I here give the reason, because I look on that Petition of the Psalmist in the tenth Verse, Janus-like, with two Faces, and most fit for Solomon to make, who built both the Temple, and a place, on purpose to worship towards the holiest of Holies, as if he had in this manner uttered his Mind.

O! let me never prove so Idolatrous, as to turn away to other Gods, from this place of Worshipping towards thy holy Temple (toward the Shechinah, the special place of thy Presence,) nor let me prove so rejected by thee, as in thine Anger to be cast out from before thee; but do thou impower me here to make thy Presence, and to meet with thy Favours in my Worship and Adoration of thee.

Then I have doubly render'd the last Verse, because of the fulness of the Word (Induam), Ple cloath or put on, or throw on, as the * Retiarii did their Nets over the Secutores, i. e. publicly in the sight of all Men, by covering and overwhelming them to disgrace and destroy them.

And this Induam is put in opposition to the cloathing of such Verſ. 9, 10. Men, who having Truth and Righteousness visibly about them, (as it were, their Rayment) shall be manifestly preserved and adorned thereby, as Judges by their Robes, through the over-ruling Providence and Tuition of the Almighty.

Lord!



For Christ-
mas day, as
it is appoin-
ted by the
Church.

Ord! think on him whom thou didst



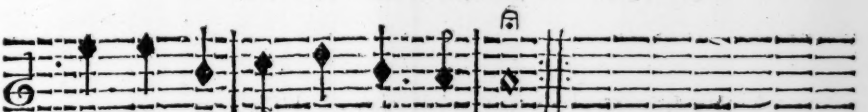
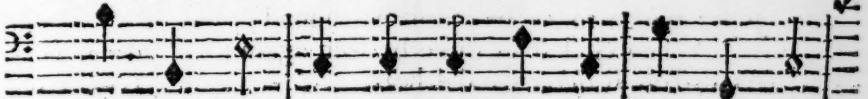
find, the Man ac--cor--ding to thy Mind; who could for



thee with all things part: With his Wives love, and



his own State, that on thy Ser-vice he might wait.



Remember Da--vid's humble Heart.



Think on his Hand that brings thee Praise,
 Strikes down thy Foes, ill Spirits lays,
 And Gifts and Musick doth afford:
 Though he did right, he had much wrong,
 Ev'n while he brought thy Ark along:
 Remember *David's* Troubles, Lord.

1 Sam. { 17.49
 16.16
 2 Sam. { 6.19.
 6.16.
 6.21.

Think on the King, and on his Care,
 Who for thy Place did well prepare;
 Lord Bless his Heir, build up his House:
 He would have set, and trimm'd up thine,
 Lord! bless our acting his Design.
 Remember *David*, and his Vows.

22.3.
 4.5.
 1 Chr. { 28.14
 5.
 2.
 15.1.

Thus said he, when he took his Oath,
 To *Jacob's* God I plight my Troth,
 Though I am safe in my new Forts:
 I will not sleep, nor there sit still,
 'Till the Ark rests on *Zion's* Hill,
 And from its * Curtains comes to † Courts.

2 Sam. 5. 9.

2 Sam. 7. 2.

* Tabernacula.

† Usus est numero multitudinis, ad plures Templi partes indicandas; nam in Templo (inquit Kimchi) erant Domus tres.

* It shall not be Dedicated, and so not dwell in 'till Consecrated; as the Jews did ever some part of their House for special Worship.

† Tandem tam longè abest ut ego sem dormiturus; ut ne oculis quidem militaturus sem.

My House (though built) shall not be * Bleft;
 My Bed shall yield me no more † Rest,
 Than when 'twas searched for no good:
 'Till here (with ours) God's Seat is found,
 Being with lofty Cedars crown'd,
 Instead of *Kiriath-jearim's* Wood.

1 Sam. 19. 15,
 16.

1 Chron. 13.
 5, 6.

For in the Woods we lately found
 Joys, which to *Abram's* Hill may sound,
 When God shall there be seen again:
 As first at *Bethlem* we did hear
 How glorious all his Goings were,
 Up to the Mountains from the Plain.

1 Sam. 7. 1.

Gen. 22. 13.

1 Sam. 16. 1.

Mic. 5. 2.

And while God comes with the glad Throng,
 In ev'ry place we hear this Song,
 See, see, where our Beloved goes:
 That he may stand on *Sion* still,
 Look how he leaps from Hill to Hill,
 And makes us skip for joy, like Roes.

Cant. 2. 8.

Rev. 14. 1.

Psal. 114. 4.

Come

John 2. 22. Come, let's to *Sion* march along
In order, (lest we Worship wrong)
Numb. 10. 33, After the Ark our Course is bent :
35, 36. We'll worship with the solemn Cries,
Rise, Lord! unto thy Rest arise,
Rise to a Temple from a Tent.

1 Chr. 15. 27. The Train shall shout, and so will I, }
The Choir shall raise their Voices high; }
The Priests shall shew the Sanctity }
Both of thy Person, and their Place,
2 Chr. 6. 12, By being cloath'd with Righteousness:
13. And thine Anointed thou shalt bless,
Nor from thy * Presence turn his Face.

* Or Favour. See *Grego-*
ry's Notes on the word.

2 Sam. 6. 21. Oh! never turn from us thy Face,
For *David's* sake, love *David's* Race;
Do not his Stock (as *Saul's*) disown:
Since, if his Sons thy Laws obey,
1 Chr. 9. 17. Thou, Lord, hast sworn his * Seed shall sway,
And here for ever have a Throne.

* *De fructu Ventris tui,*
quoniam uterus Uxoris cum
omni suo fructu ad Mari-
um pertinet.

2 Sam. 6. 12. For here hath God his Favour shown,
13. And chose our Dwellings for his own;
He will not stay with *Edom* * still,
But his Provisions shall bless ours,
Since on the Rich he dainty's show'rs,
And can with Bread the Hungry fill.

* Neither with *Edom*
whom he hated; nor
Obed Edom whom he
blessed.

2 Chr. 5. 41. Here will I sit, faith God, and Carve
To each poor Soul, that none may starve;
All Wants I will so far supply,
That a large Alb of Thankfulness
Shall be my Priest's perpetual Dress,
And Saints shall set their Joys on high.

Vidum eis (non vidu-
am) benedicam.

Xúgev pro Súgev, as
the 72 Interp. will ren-
der it, which properly
signifies *Penison* (a dain-
ty indeed,) but it im-
plies more largely any
Virtuals or *Provisions*.

On high shall *David* see my Love,
As here in *Sion*; so above,
Like *Aaron's* Rod, shall bud his * Horn:
† *Glory's* own Lamp lights up his Line,
And on his Head my Crown shall shine;
But on his Foes I'll throw my Scorn.

* His Royal Dignity,
Power, and Off-spring.
1 King. 11. 36.

|| *Haud secus ac Re-*
tiaui; ut supra in com-
ment.

† *Aziasud*
mu, which
mytically re-
fers to *Chrill*.
Psal. 4. 2.

Gloria Patri, &c.

*Glory be to the Father, Son,
And Holy-Ghost, the Three in One,
Whom as one Being we adore:
Tho ev'ry Person of the Three
For ever was, shall ever be,
And is, God Blessed evermore.*

AMEN.

CON.

CONTEMPLATIONS and COLLECTS

ON THE

Thirteenth PSALM of DEGREES,

BEING

The CXXXII. PSALM.

O Lord God! that thou mayest the more graciously consider us and our Affairs, Remember our Lord *Jesus* we beseech thee, and all his Afflictions, all his Humblings, all his Troubles, his Cares, and Loves, and Passions for us: look how through the whole Volume of thy Book it is written of him, That he should fulfill thy Will, O God! and therefore he begged himself so far as to be born of the Stock and Lineage of *David*, that he might perform the Promise he had made, not to fail his People, but to become their Righteousness, and their Redemption; and so though *the Foxes had holes, and the Birds of the Air nests, he would not have where to lay his Head*: Neither would he give sleep to his Eyes, but would be walking, and watching, and praying, whole Nights together, that he might be doing good to us, for us, in us, and with us, that here again in this base Earth and World of ours, he might find out an Habitation for the Mighty God, and a place where his holy Dove might rest. Grant then, O glorious Lord! that all his Labours and Desires, his Endeavours and good Will concerning us may not be frustrated, but let us be built up a Spiritual House upon him, and be blest in our Undertakings through him unto thy Glory; that as we have been directed, so we may go on (not stand still) to see thy Salvation, and to worship thy Goodness, which doth arise with healing under its Wings for us, as a Hen, and as an Eagle, to cure, to carry, to secure and feed us, to make our Natures thy Abode, our Hearts thy Sanctuary, our Souls the resting Place, both for thee, and the Ark of thy Strength; and all this, to what purpose? but for our Advantage, (not thine) that we might be a Chosen Generation, a Royal Priesthood, clothed with Christ's Righteousness, and cover'd with thy Comeliness, which invests us with all Peace and Joy through the Holy Ghost.

O therefore! let us lift up our Hearts with Love, and Praise, and Comfort, in believing, trusting, and begging, for thy Son's sake, that neither our Faces may be turned from thee to go a Whoring after other things (that are not God, nor indeed good), nor let the face of thine Anointed be turned so away from us, as not to know us at the last Day.

No, blessed Lord! grant us such an interest in our dear Redeemer, as that we may have a Title to thy Favour, and be able to put thee in mind how thou hast sworn, and wilt not fail unto thy well-beloved Son, that of the Fruit of his Body thou wilt set upon the Throne, and hast promised to all true Believers (his Servants,) that if they keep thy Covenant, they and their Children shall Reign with thee for

ever, and find new cause of rejoycing in thee, who hast chosen the Sons of Men for thy *Zion*, and desired their enlarged Souls for thy restful Habitation, and chief Delight!

But when shall we come to this Joy unspeakable, and full of Glory? When we have with patience waited on thy good pleasure, and not fainted in our expectation of thy faithfulness, then for certain we shall see thee, abundantly blessing and rewarding the small Provisions made here to serve thee withall, and thou wilt satisfie such as *hunger and thirst* after thy Kingdom with the Bread of Life, and with the Wells of Salvation, and they shall be array'd like thy Priests with Holiness, and shine like Lamps in thy Presence for evermore. *Amen.*

Help us, O Mighty God of *Jacob*! to sing no Requiems to our Souls or Conditions here, 'till we have not only heard of thee with the hearing of the Ear, but hearkened unto thee with the attention of the Mind, and come unto thee with the obedience of the Will, finding out a place in our Affections and Understandings where thou mayest dwell, that thou mayest hereafter prepare a Mansion for us, even in thy House, O Father!

And with us be mindful of all Degrees amongst us, from *David* upon the Throne, to *Job* upon the Dunghill; be good unto them in all their Cares, Vows, Prayers, Devotions, and Afflictions, according to the multitude of thy most tender Mercies, and comfortable Promises: Let the King rejoyce in thy strength, O Lord! and do thou make his Power to flourish, and his Righteousness to blossom like the Rod of *Aaron*; ordain a lustre of Honour and Happines for him and his House for evermore; let not his Candle go out in obscurity, nor quench the Light of *Israel*, but let his Enemies be enveloped with disgrace and disappointments, and cloath thy Priests, and our Church of *England*, with Honour, Prosperity, and perfect Redemption, that the Horn of *David* may bud amongst us, and the Power of Godliness shoot forth every where in our Land, in the great City, in Princes Courts, and in thy House and ours, so that thou mayest have Mercy on *Zion*, and repair the breaches of thy *Jerusalem*, while she that sate Disconsolate as a Widow may now be feasted with Bread from Heaven, with the *Manna* of Divine Ordinances duly administred; so that no Soul amongst us may go empty away, but that even he who gathers least may have no lack.

Exod. 16. 18.

Lord! thou canst make thy holy Viands, like *David's* Provision at the Passover, be dealt so plentifully to every one, as that none shall be unprovided for, or ashamed, who depend like *Ruth* upon thy Bounty; but they who despise thee shall be wrapt up in Confusion as in a Cloak.

Therefore let thy Servants joy in thy Salvation, and all our People know the Lord, acknowledging his Goodness and his Bounty that blesses the Abundance of the Rich, and fills the Hungry with good things, that both may have Bread enough, and neither want nor repine, but seek their Food of God, while he makes those that depart wickedly from him to continue in shame and scarcity.

Ah! that we may stand in awe and not sin, lest we inherit the promotion of Fools, instead of the Kingdom and Crown of *David*; so provide for us, gracious Master, in every state and condition, as may seem best to thy God-like Wisdom, and prove most to thine Eternal Glory, if not to ours, O! *Our Father, &c.*

THE

THE FOURTEENTH
Psalm of Degrees,
 BEING
 The CXXXIII. PSALM,

Was composed by David (as some think) at his Coronation, after ^{2 Sam. 5.}
his eight years Civil War, to exhort the People to Love and ^{1 Chr. 1.}
Amity, according to the exhortation of the Apostle, for those ^{2 Pet. 1. 7.}
were the Graces which did most adorn his Life, both when a ^{1 Sam. 17.}
public and a private Person; and so this Psalm, as the next, ^{29.}
was fitted for the most Solemn Times of Worship, and the ^{1 Sam. 18.}
happy Return from Bondage and Captivity, because it magni- ^{2 Sam. 1.}
fies the pious Accord, Uniformity, and Blessed Communion of ^{2 Sam. 3.}
the Church of God in all Times. ^{2 Sam. 10.}
^{& 9. & 18.}
^{&c.}

It Celebrates the Excellencies of Love, both in and towards God
and Man; it reflects much Joy from the Consideration of the Mysti-
cal Union between Christ and his Members, whom he owns as Bre-
thren, who shall live, and live together also with him, though
he is their High Priest, Rock, and Prince, according to the most
apt Comparisons of the holy Oyl, and high-born Dew; which Similies,
as well as the Subject, were so well calculated to the Time, when
there was a Prince and an High Priest restored again to Israel, that
it is no wonder we find it placed among the Graduals.

*In Zoroba-
 bel, and Jo-
 shua, 1 ypes
 of the Mes-
 siah.*

Some apply it to all the Israelites Love one towards another,
who were Brethren of the same Stock (as we are all in Adam;)
and likewise to their Love of their Ruler, who was higher than the
rest, (as was shewn in Saul) like Mount Hermon and Sion, more
advancing than other Hills: Therefore to animate us with the like
affections towards our Brethren, Parents, and Superiours, they
say, the Priest's Blessing is compared to the Sacred Oyl, and the
Prince's Favour to the fruitful Dew, (according to that expression
of the Wisest of Kings) which descends from the highest to the
lowest, and is both pleasant and profitable to all; as the Heathen
Poet Meander (once quoted by St. Paul himself) could say,

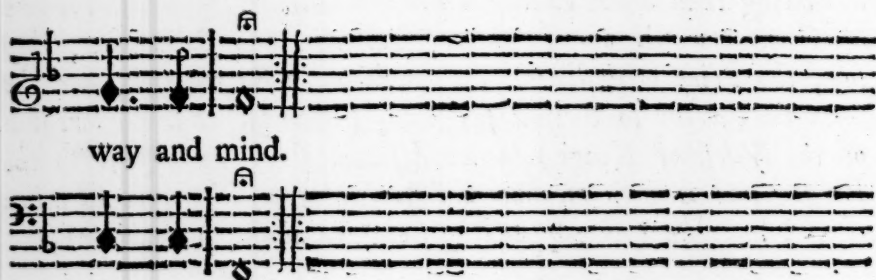
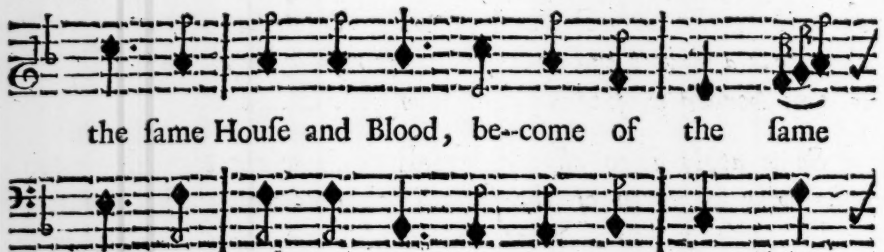
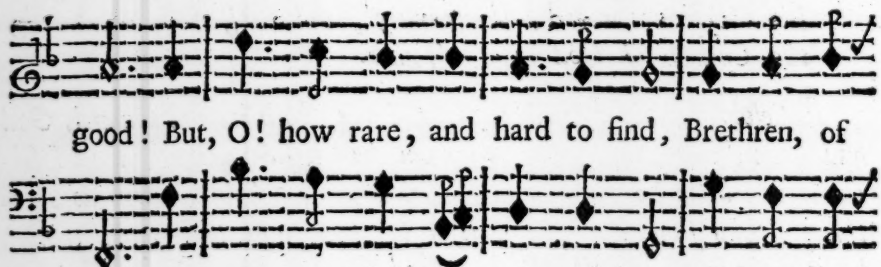
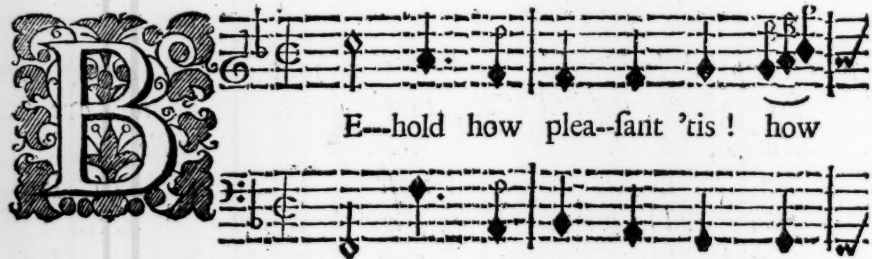
Ὡς ἡδὺ ἐν ἀδελφοῖσιν ὁμιλοῖας ἔργως.

V

Some

Some of the Rabbins think it a particular Eulogy of the Concord and Conformity among the Priests in their Religious Exercises; and therefore mention is made of Aaron the most Anointed of the Lord (as he may be termed, rather than chief Anointed,) because most Oyl was expended on him.

For Saint
George's, or
All-Saints
Day.



Let

Like *Sampson's* Honey, strong and sweet,
'Tis thus to see Men's Hearts and Hands,
As *Jonathan's* and *David's* meet,
Twisting together in Love's Bands.

Judg. 14. 14.

1 Sam. 18. 3.

When Prince and People so are one,
As that the Oyl, pour'd on his Head,
Down to the lowest Limb doth run;
In Grace, and Peace, and Pardon spread.

2 Sam. 19. 39.

5. 3.

19. 23.

'Tis like the precious Ointment shed
Upon the High Priest's hallow'd Crown,
Which both perfum'd his Beard and Head,
And thence upon his Clothes fell down.

Levit. 8. 12.

Thus have I seen Clouds big with Rain
First give their Dews to all the Hills,
And then show'r Wealth on the low Plain
As Friendship benefits distills,

On Friendship's Fleece God's Love brings down
Blessings, as numberless as Drops;
Which from Mount *Sion* deck the Town,
And cloath the Fields from *Hermon's* Tops.

Judg. 6. 38,

39.

1ste Ham-
mond.

As to the Vale, these Mountains are;
So to the Weak, the Potent prove
Useful and kind, though distant far;
Yet center'd, like the World, by Love.

For all our Comforts come from Love,
By Love, God gives the Happy Life;
That Blest below, and best above,
There without end, here without strife.

Gloria Patri.

*Glorj to him who makes our Blifs,
To the one God, in Persons three;
As in beginning was, now is,
And shall be to Eternity.*

AMEN.

CON-

CONTEMPLATIONS and COLLECTS

ON THE

Fourteenth PSALM of DEGREES,

BEING

The CXXXIII. PSALM.

O Blessed Father! who hast made many of us of one Blood and Kind: O blessed Saviour! who hast made us many of one Bread, and one Lump: O blessed Spirit! who art the Love, both of the Father, and of the Son, shed this abroad into all our Hearts abundantly; look upon us graciously, O thou only one, most loving and pitying Lord God! that we may look upon thee better (though it be but darkly at the best) in that Sea of Glass before the Throne, in that clearest mirror and reflection of thy favour to Mankind, to wit, in Christ incarnate, in whom God is most wonderfully, wisely, and kindly seen to reconcile the World (what is that but Vileness, Vanity, and Vexation, Frailty, and a Curse) unto himself, that Man might be far more able than he was by the Glasses and Laver of the Tabernacle, both to see his Spots and Pollutions to get clean from them, and that God might be consider'd and admired not so much in the broken Glass of Nature, nor in the blotted Book of the Creature, (which shew us his power and greatness) as in the Face of a Redeemer, in the Testament of the holy *Jesus*, which most plainly, and yet most gloriously speaks thy Love and Goodness, and calls for ours; since if thou hast so loved this naughty World, and us that help to make it worse, how ought we to love thee, and also to love one another?

O how good, as well as how pleasant, a thing it is to know *Christ* as our Head, and we our selves his Members! This is as sweet and useful as Life it self, to make our short Lives here not tedious to our selves or others; nay, this is *Life Eternal*, because Charity never fails: We shall have that Grace for all if we are *Christians*, we shall keep it always if we are Saints, for it is Holiness, and will be Happiness; it is the Oyl that from our Head, from our everlasting *Aaron*, falls down to the very Skirts of his Clothing, to revive and refresh the lowest and most humbled Sinner (if believing), and it is that Anointing from above which we must not want, especially at the last Article of Life, in the greatest extremities of Temptation, but we must carry it along with us into our Father's presence; then shall we be in his sight as a Field which the Lord hath blest, then will he smell the Odour of our elder Brother's Vest upon us, and we shall inherit the Promises, and abide in his Love in the participation, and in the propagation thereof, Divine Love being the Dew of Heaven that causes the fruitfulness of the Earth; it makes us high and white like *Hermon*, pleasant and safe as Mount *Sion*; it makes our Superiours, and the

great ones of the Earth, not to be Rocks of Offence to us, but to be rather, as the shadows of a Rock in a dry Land, needful Supports, convenient Sanctuaries and Refreshments, and it causes God to command a Blessing on us from all degrees of People above us, and of conditions round about us. Therefore,

Dear Lord! help us to live in such Concord and brotherly Kindness, as that we may be Blessed from all our Relations, from our Superiours, by having the Oyl of Spiritual Blessings, and the Dew of Temporal Favours bestowed on us, Love and good Will from Equals, Prayers and good Wishes from Inferiours; being so careful and affectionate, both for thy Priests, and for our Princes, as that neither *Moses* nor *Aaron* may be murmured at, but obeyed by us, and we may be protected and guided by their Hands in the Spirit and Practice of all true Love and Charity, for the honour of our Christian Profession, and for the glory of thy holiest Name, O *Christ Jesus* our Lord! who livest and reignest, &c.

THE

THE FIFTEENTH
Pfalm of Degrees,
 BEING
 The CXXXIV. PSALM,

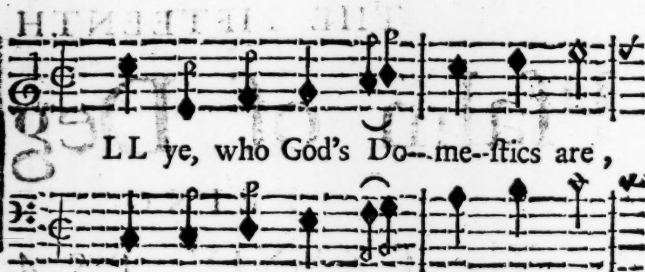
Was composed by David (De Muys thinks) as well as the former, and appointed to put the People in mind of their more solemn Times of Meeting with that pious, charitable, and unspotted Souls, with which they ought to approach God; this being an Euge, an incitement to all, who are the Lord's Servants, to be constant and pure in his Service, as a particular hoc age to the Priests at the Canonical Hours of Prayer, and stated Times of public Worship, to lift up clean Hands, and holy Hearts.

It is a proper Close to the preceding Hymns, being often sung at Midnight at the end of the Nocturnal Offices by the Jews, and design'd by me for the Eves of our greater Festivals: It is an Exhortation generally directed not only to the Priests, who kept the Watch in the Temple, ^{but} to the People, who watched the Days and Nights, for many departed not; as you may gather from Psal. 92. 2. and Luke 2. 37.

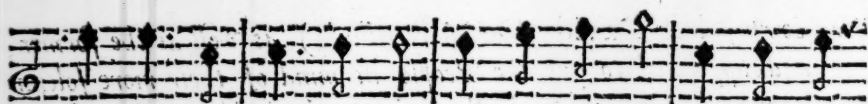
It seems to me most probable, that this Psalm was composed by Ezra the Priest, or some of his Time, not only because it is the last of the Graduals, which were accommodated for the Return from Captivity, but because it is Dramatic; chiefly concerning the Priests, who stand by night in the House of the Lord; or as the 72^d, in the Courts of the House, which was not built in David's time; and therefore it is not so likely a composition of David's, but of Ezra, when the holy manner of worshipping God was restored, Ezra 8. 6. and the Priests set in their Courses, Vers. 7.

In the first Verse of this Psalm I should suppose the Choir joining to the Music, and then the Chief Priest (for that Watch) giving the rest Directions as in the second Verse; and they again in the third Verse blessing him, (for it is Bless thee, and not yee) though in my version I use the Plural throughout.

A Nocturnis
for Christ-
mas Eve.



Alleluia, who God's Do-me-stics are,



see you, with An-gels wait; and in your Courtes, like each



Star, by Night shine at Heav'ns Gate.



Among the Jews the Choir stood, the People kneeled, the High-Priest fate, and the washings of their Hands and Feet (so frequent during the time of their officiating) were call'd *Sanctifications*.

**Eis mi aya*, in the 72. is short of the Original, though it means in holy Things, as well as Places, for it signifies *Holiness* in the Abstract (*Christ* typified by the Ark of the Covenant); and such Holiness in Men as could adapt them for the discharge of their Duty, which is hinted by the Apostle, 1 Tim. 2. 8. And this was signified by the Jews often washing their Hands and Feet before their Praying, which was stiled קדש *Sanctification*: *Us alibi indigitavi.*

Look while ye stand, or kneel, or sit,
Ye serve and blest the Lord;
Look that your Hands God's Altar fit,
And to his Praise accord.

Look ye be clean, for Holiness
Becomes God's holy Place;
Watch well, and Pray, that Filthiness
None of God's Works deface.

Then God, who made the World, and stays
On *Sion*, Grace shall send;
'Till he shall Bless, and we shall Praise,
From hence, World without end.

Gloria Patri, &c.

*To God the Father, God the Son,
And God the Holy-Ghost,
Be Glory giv'n, by ev'ry one
Who make the Lord their Boast.*

AMEN.

Y

CON.

CONTEMPLATIONS and COLLECTS

ON THE

Fifteenth PSALM of DEGREES,

BEING

The C X X X I V. P S A L M.

O Thou that acceptest not the Persons of Princes, nor regardest the Rich more than the Poor, since they are all alike the Works of thy Hands! grant that we may not be such Fools as to forget thee in any time of our quiet, fulness, or repose, lest thou come at an Hour when thou art not look'd for by us, and find us unfit for thy Appearance, who canst trouble whole Nations even at Midnight (at a time when we least think of Disturbance or Remove), as we have great Examples in the People of *Israel*, *Egypt*, and *Assyria*; for there is not any Darknes (no not the shadows of Death) where the workers of Iniquity can hide themselves from thine Eyes, though all the Mountains of the World should cover them; thou beholdest all our Goings, though thy Foot-steps are too little regarded by us.

Therefore let us not think to do mischief or wrong like the Evil one, who sowed Tares while other Men slept; nor to commit Violence or Robbery; nor to Defraud or Deceive, like the *Harlot* at Midnight; but even at that Season be Chast, and Pious, and Charitable, like *Boaz*, denying our selves, and mastering our Concupiscences, and (like *Sampson* in *Gaza*) disappoint the malice of that implacable Adversary, who hunts after our Souls, and ceases not, like a Dog, to go about seeking whom he may devour.

Lord! deliver thou my Darling from his Power, as thou didst *St. Paul*, even at such a dismal time when I may seem in his very Jaws; then let my Soul escape and get away, and find a way to serve thee, (as that chosen Vessel did) who could Pray and sing Praises unto thee even at Midnight; so let us endeavour to worship the Lord with holy Worship, with clean Hands, and a pure Heart, that we may stand on his holy Hill, and remember in all the Formalities of outward Cleanness to keep our Spirits pure; and in all our Approaches to thee, to keep our selves unspotted of the World; to this end give us inward Holiness, and the Sanctifications both of Heart and Life, that in the darkest hour of Temptation, in the dearest time of Distress, in the cloudiest night of Trouble, or of Agonies, we may lift up our Praises and Adorations unto thee, who canst send thine Angel (as thou didst once thy Son, at such a time) to comfort and recover our vile Natures, and to command Deliverances unto thy People, even from thy most holy Place.

O!

O! that we may be of the number of those who qualifie themselves by thy Service for the better discharge of their Duty and thy Will; that having the filthy Garments of our own evil Thoughts, Words, and Actions (like *Joshua's* the High-Priest's) taken off from us, we may not have *Satan* left at our right Hands to accuse or command us, but may see *Jesus* at thy right Hand interceding for us; and being clothed in the long Robes of his Righteousness, we may lift up our Hands in thy Sanctuary, and bless thee for evermore, who hast made the Heavens as well as the Sea, for thy Children to adore thee in, O!

Our Father, &c.

Y 2

THE

THE FIFTEEN
Psalms of Degrees,
 O R
ASCENTS,

Ca. 40. v. 22.
 34.

Are so called, because they were sung Anthem-wise by several Parts of the Choir, with Elevation of Voice on some higher Ground, or place of advantage; perhaps on the Steps of the Temple, which in Ezekiel's Vision are mentioned to be Fifteen in number: And just so many Stairs, say the Talmudists, were there mounting from the Women's Court to the Men's, on which, they fancy, these P S A L M S were sung, and therefore thus termed, Ὠδαὶ ᾠδῶν ἀναβαθμῶν καὶ ἀναβάσεων (eis τὰς ἀναβάσεις, as Aquila and Symachus.)

Cap. 8.

But I think rather because they were much used by the Hebrews upon their coming up from Babylon, and at the building of the second Temple, as may be guessed from Nehemiah; at which time they might indeed begin very properly with the 120th Psalm, by reason of the contempt and calumny of their ill-willers at that time; who were such as are there described Arabians, crafty and cruel Adversaries, who maliciously opposed both their unloosing the Chains of Captivity, and the erection of their Buildings.

Need was there then of Songs of ^{Elev}ation and Ascents to advance God's high Deliverances of them, and exalt his Praise and Glory in the most excellent way of rejoicing, which was in their eminent Music, as the Title שיר המעלות, rendered Cantica Dignitatum, may likewise bear.

As also to revive their drooping Spirits by some pleasant kind of Melody or lofty Note, well known to the Jews by the name of מעלות, which some suppose may here import no more than this משיביל עלמות, as ויהיה in the front of other Psalms, viz. to notifie that the Tune or Key these were to be sang in, was the same with such other Psalms as were known to begin with the word מעלות.

FINIS.

